GOD

HIS EXISTENCE *and* HIS NATURE

A Thomistic Solution of Certain Agnostic Antinomies

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"The first indemonstrable principle is that the same thing cannot be at the same time affirmed and denied; this is based on the notion of being and non-being, and on this principle all others are based, as is stated by the Philosopher in the Fourth Book of his Metaphysics, ch. 3."

(St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, q.94, a.2)

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PART II

THE NATURE OF GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES

CHAPTER I

What Formally Consititutes the Divine Nature According to Our Imperfect Mode of Knowing It

42) *The problem. The Deity, as it is in itself, cannot be known by our natural powers. But among the divine perfections which are contained formally and eminently in it, and of which we have a natural knowledge, is there not one which claims priority over the others? Various solutions.*

Having proved that God is, we must proceed to the consideration of what He is. We have already (n. 32) proved that reason can acquire some knowledge of the divine essence, but that it is incapable of knowing positively what properly constitutes the Deity or of knowing it *quidditative*. "God can be known indeed," says St. Thomas,[1] in a natural way "through the images of His effects," in that these effects are a reflection of Him.[2] Now there cannot be equality between the divine effects and the infinite virtue or power which produced them, and they can be only imperfect and very faint images of this power, so that they present as multiplied and divided the attributes which are present in the first cause in an absolutely simple unity. Thus, in a way, the sun contains eminently the various forms of energy which we undoubtedly find on the earth. Thus colors are contained in light, and in a higher order the unity of the human soul includes the

[1] *Summa theol.*, Ia, q. 13, a. 5; q. 12, a. 12.

[2] The proper or proportionate object of a created intelligence is created being; and the proper object of a created intelligence united to a body is the essence of sensible things or what there is of the intelligible in the sensible. Cf. Ia, q. 12, a. 4. See also *infra* (n. 47), on the invisibility of God.

perfection of the sensitive and vegetative souls, such as we find these in animals and plants.[3] Therefore all the perfections which are many and separate in creatures are found unitedly in the eminent simplicity of the Deity. We see this to be particularly so from the proof based on the various degrees in being (fourth proof), arguing as it does from the multiple to the one, from the composite to the simple, from the imperfect to the perfect (n. 39).

St. Thomas discusses this question at length in connection with the names given to God. "When any term expressing perfection," he says, "is applied to a creature, it signifies that perfection distinct in idea from other perfections; as, for instance, by the term 'wise' applied to a man, we signify some perfection distinct from a man's essence, and distinct from his power and existence, and from all similar things; whereas, when we apply it to God, we do not mean to signify anything distinct from His essence or power or existence. Thus also this term 'wise' (or the term 'being'), applied to man, in some degree circumscribes, envelops, and comprehends the thing signified; whereas this is not the case when it is applied to God; but it leaves the thing signified as incomprehended, and as a perfection which infinitely surpasses all the meanings of which it is susceptible. Hence it is evident that this term *'wise'* is not applied in the same way to God and to man. The same rule applies to other terms. Hence no name is predicated *univocally* of God and of creatures . . . but in an analogous sense.

"However, we cannot say, as some have said, that the names predicated of God and of creatures are purely and simply equivocal, in such a way that there is no similarity between the uncreated and the created being. If such were the case, nothing could be known or demonstrated of God through creatures; for the rea-

[3] These are but very faint analogies. Solar energy is not, in fact, of a higher order than terrestrial energy. Light is not of a higher order than colors. Finally, the human soul, which contains eminently and formally sensitive life and vegetative life, is still very defective, for sensitive life applies univocally to man and beast, whereas nothing can be predicated univocally of God and creatures.

soning would always be exposed to the fallacy of equivocation; the same term would be employed in totally different senses, a verbal similarity being the only thing in their favor. How could the Philosopher have demonstrated so many important truths concerning the Author of all things? How could the Apostle St. Paul have said in Rom. 1:20: 'The invisible things of God are clearly seen being understood by the things that are made'?

"If the names of the absolute perfections predicated of God and of creatures are neither univocal nor equivocal, what are they? They are analogous. This means that they denote things essentially different between which there is a certain proportion." [4]

We have already (n. 29) proved the transcendent or analogical validity of the primary ideas which denote absolute perfections. These perfections, as we said, may be predicated of God not merely by way of metaphor, as when we say of God that He is angry; but they may be said of Him literally. As a matter of fact, they imply no imperfection and therefore are in no way opposed to the supremely perfect Being.[5]

Although they may be predicated of God according to their *proper meaning,* or formally, these notions denote, nevertheless, things essentially different when applied to God and to creatures. Thus, even in the created order, the notion of knowledge which is applied, according to its proper meaning, both to sensation and to intellection, denotes in both cases essentially different things, there being a resemblance only of analogy or proportion between them. Sensation is to the sensible as intellection is to the intelligible. For this reason we can truly say of each that it is knowledge.

In like manner we say that the first cause is to its existence, as the creature is to its existence: the first cause is to its goodness, as the creature is to its goodness. This permits us to say of God that

[4] St. Thomas, Ia, q. 13, a. 5.
[5] *Ibid.*, a. 2, 3, 6.

He is good, and to call Him "being," using these terms in an analogous sense.

It is only in a *negative* and *relative* way that we can acquire by our natural powers a knowledge of the *divine mode* of these perfections. Thus we say that God is an infinite being, meaning by this that He is not finite, not limited. Or again, by comparison with the goodness of created beings, we say of God that He is the sovereign Good. The argument from *causality* enables us to affirm the existence of God and of His perfections. The mode of the presence of these attributes in God is but very imperfectly determined by way of *negation* and of *eminence*.[6]

In chapter three we will explain how these absolute perfections can all be found formally identified in the eminence of the Deity without being destructive of one another, and without ceasing to be formally in the Deity.[7]

It is of importance to point out here that the formal principle of the Deity as to what properly constitutes it as such, cannot be known by our natural powers. This proves that in God there are truths of a supernatural order.[8] Cajetan, merely repeating the doctrine of St. Thomas and recalling the terms used by Dionysius, says that the formal concept of the Deity is superior to the concepts of being, of unity, and of goodness. "The divine reality is

[6] *Ibid.*, a. 3.

[7] The classical text of St. Thomas on this point is that taken from the first book of his *Sentences*, d. 2, q. 1, a. 3, O: "That God exceeds the power of our intellect, this is due, *on the part of God Himself, to the plenitude of His perfection, and also on our part, to the feebleness of the intellect which fails to comprehend this perfection.* Hence it is evident that a plurality of these notions is not only due to the nature of our intellect but also because of God Himself, in that His perfection surpasses each concept of our intellect. Therefore, there is something in the object which corresponds to the plurality of those notions, as to what God is, not indeed the plurality of the object, but a fulness of perfection, and hence it comes about that these concepts are applied to it." See also the explanation of this text given by the Thomists at the beginning of their treatises on God, *e. g.*, Billuart, *De Deo*, diss. 2, a. 3; also John of St. Thomas, Gonet.

[8] *Summa*, Ia, q. 12, a. 4.

prior to being and to all its differences: it is *above being* and above the one." [9]

The Deity contains formally the notes of being, unity, and goodness, but it is above these. That is why they can be identified in the eminence of the Deity without being eradicated.

All Thomists agree in saying that there is no real or formal distinction between the divine attributes previous to that made by the mind. Likewise in created things, between the genus and specific difference (animality and rationality, for instance, as found in man), there is no distinction previous to that made by the mind.

[9] Cajetan, in his commentary on the *Summa* (Ia, q. 39, a. 1, n. 7), speaking of the Holy Trinity, says: "*In the order of realities* (*so far as a thing is*), in God a thing is one, not in a purely absolute sense nor in a purely relative sense nor is it mixed or composite or a result of both these, but it is one in a *most eminent and formal way*, containing in itself something relative (in fact, many things relative) and also something absolute. *In the formal order* (*that of formal concepts*), in itself, not according to our manner of speaking, in God there is *but one formal concept*, which is not purely absolute nor purely relative nor purely communicable, nor purely incommunicable. But it is a concept which in a *most eminent and formal way* contains whatever there is of absolute perfection, and whatever is demanded by the Trinity in a relative sense. It must be so, because to anything absolutely simple in itself and absolutely one, there must correspond a *formal and adequate concept:* otherwise the thing would not be intrinsically and immediately the one intelligible of whatsoever intellect. We have a confirmation of this in the '*Verbum Dei*,' because it is the only one of its kind. Evidently if the word is perfect, it should adequately represent that of which it is the word.

"We make a mistake, however, in arguing from absolute and relative things to the knowledge of God, in that we imagine that the distinction between the absolute and the relative is, as it were, prior to the divine reality. Yet quite the opposite is the case: for the *divine reality is prior to being* and all its differences. It is *above being* and *above the one*."

In like manner Cajetan (*op. cit.*, Ia, q. 13, a. 5, n. 7) remarks: "Thus the formal concept of *wisdom*, and the formal concept of *justice* are elevated so as to constitute *one formal concept of a higher order, the proper concept, namely, of the Deity*. They constitute numerically one formal concept, containing *eminently* what is implied in each concept: not *virtually*, however, as the concept of light includes the concept of color, but *formally*, as the concept of light includes the concept of calorific energy."

St. Thomas had said about the same: "God, however, as considered in Himself, is altogether one and simple; yet our intellect knows Him by different conceptions, because it cannot see Him as He is in Himself" (Ia, q. 13, a. 12).

We also say that they are only *virtually distinct,* or that their reality is the foundation for making this distinction which actually exists as such only in the mind. Even *less than this is the virtual distinction* between the divine attributes. We are right in conceiving the genus as potential and imperfect, and the specific difference as its extrinsic perfection, which is superadded to it and which is its determining element. But in God there is no foundation for such a distinction. We have no grounds for conceiving a divine perfection as potential, imperfect, and determined by another divine perfection extrinsic to it. Hence, even according to our very imperfect mode of knowing, the divine perfections must be conceived not as extrinsic to one another, but as *actually* included in one another in an *implicit* way, though each is not *explicitly* included in the others; otherwise we would have to admit a purely verbal distinction between them. Among the virtual distinctions, this one between the attributes is therefore the least that can be conceived.[10]

Hence we see that it is impossible for us to know, by the natural power of reason, what formally constitutes the divine nature as it is in itself. To arrive at a knowledge of God, according to what

[10] Such is the common teaching of the Thomists. See John of St. Thomas, Gonet, and Billuart, at the beginning of their treatises on God. Billuart, for instance, in his *De Deo,* diss. 2, a. 2, sec. 3, writes as follows: "The divine attributes are not distinguished from each other, and from the divine essence; nor do the divine relations differ from the divine essence by an actual-formal distinction, which is commonly called the Scotist distinction. [It is a formal distinction, though actual on the part of the thing.] Between each of the divine attributes and between them and the divine essence, also between the relations and the essence, there is a *virtual distinction,* or one known as *rationis ratiocinatae* [a purely mental distinction]. This distinction is not of the major kind, when the objective concept of a thing excludes that of another; but it is of the *minor* kind, which is by the way of explicit and implicit concepts."

When the Thomists say that the divine essence *actually* and *implicitly* contains the divine attributes, they have in mind the divine essence according to our mode of knowing it. Thus, one who speaks of God as the *self-existing Being,* does not *explicitly* speak of His justice. But the divine essence, such as it is in itself, according to the proper, intrinsic, and eminent notion of the Deity, contains *actually* and *explicitly* all the divine attributes.

properly and intrinsically constitutes the *Deity,* there must be a supernatural revelation. It is only by divine faith that we are able in this life to know in an obscure manner the mystery of the intimate life of God. But to have evident knowledge of what constitutes the Deity, we should have to see it directly, as the blessed do in heaven. Only then could we see the intimate manner in which the divine perfections, which can be known in a natural way, are indentified in the eminence of the Deity without being destructive of one another.

Although it is not possible to know in a natural way what constitutes the Deity as it is in itself, among the absolute perfections which can be known in a natural way, is there not one, according to our imperfect mode of knowing them, which is the fundamental principle of the distinction between God and the world and which is the source of all the divine attributes? If such be the case, we should be right from the logical point of view of our imperfect knowledge in saying that this perfection is what formally constitutes the divine essence. It would be in God what rationality is in man: the specifying principle which distinguishes Him from other beings, and from which His properties are derived.

The divine perfections, as they are *in themselves,* though not distinct from one another, are all equal, in the sense that no one of them is more perfect than the others, each of them implying the others. But, inasmuch as they are distinct from one another according to our mode of knowing them, and are analogically like created perfections, it is possible to find a certain order among them, in that there is a first among them.[11]

The problem thus stated has been solved in various ways by the Scholastics. We must give a brief account of these solutions.

1) Ockham and the *Nominalists* do not admit that any one of the perfections explains all the others. This is perfectly in agreement with their theory about universals. They maintain that an

[11] See Billuart, *De Deo,* diss. 2, a. 3, appendix.

essence is merely a collection of individuals; a substance, the aggregation of its different characteristics. Likewise, according to them, the divine essence is nothing more than the grouping of all the perfections, and there is no need to seek for a logical priority of one of them over the others. Moreover, the Nominalists admitted merely a verbal distinction between the divine attributes, a purely mental one (*rationis ratiocinantis*), such as we have between Tullius and Cicero.

This opinion of the Nominalists leads to Agnosticism. In fact, it would no longer be possible to deduce the other divine attributes from one divine and fundamental perfection. Absolute immutability, for instance, would not have logical priority over eternity. Theology as a science would no longer be possible.

2) According to Scotus, the divine essence is formally constituted by radical infinity, and he considers that this means the exigency of all possible perfections. Also, according to this view, these perfections would be formally distinct from one another in God, before any consideration on the part of our mind.

The Thomists reject this opinion, because radical infinity or the exigency of all perfections cannot be thought of, so they say, except in a subject whose essence includes precisely this idea of exigency. This latter does not constitute the divine essence, but presupposes it and is founded upon it. In fact, we shall see that infinity is deduced from the fact that God is the self-subsisting Being (Ia, q. 7, a. 1). Besides, infinity is a mode of each of the divine attributes and not the principle from which they are derived. Finally, the simplicity of God does not admit of a formal distinction between the divine perfections previous to any consideration of them on our part. God would thus be an *accumulation* of perfections and not Perfection itself.

3) Several theologians—among whom are the Thomists John of St. Thomas, Gonet, and Billuart—are of the opinion that what

formally constitutes the divine essence is subsistent *intellection* which is always *in actu*. This reminds us of Aristotle's *νόησις νοήσεως νόησις*: thinking is a thinking on thinking.

Their principal argument is as follows: The most perfect of the metaphysical degrees is intellection, according to the gradation which we find among beings. Lifeless creatures have only being; above them we have beings endowed with life, and intelligence belongs to the higher form of life.

This opinion differs totally from absolute intellectualism, such as we find, for instance, advocated by Hegel. According to his view, being resolves itself into thought, an opinion which leads to panlogism and to the negation of freedom.

4) Most theologians consider *self-subsisting Being* (*aseity, ens a se*) as formally constituting the divine nature, that is, ultimately distinguishing it from everything created, and as the principle from which are deduced all the divine perfections, intellection included. First of all, according to this view, God is *"He who is,"* as revealed to Moses (Exod., ch. iii). This is what Aristotle means when he says that God is *Actus purus*. Among the Thomists holding this opinion, we have Capreolus, Bannez, Gotti, Contenson, Ledesma, Del Prado, and others. Molina, Vasquez, Torres, and others not of the school of St. Thomas side with these Thomists.

Before examining the soundness of these two last named opinions, let us point out the principal solutions given by those outside the *Catholic schools of theology*.

5) Certain ones are inclined to hold the priority of *goodness* over all the other attributes. This view recalls the following famous passage of Plato: "In the world of knowledge the idea of good appears last of all, and is seen only with an effort; and, when seen, is also inferred to be the universal author of all things beautiful and right, and the immediate source of reason and truth in

the intellectual world. However beautiful science and truth may be, you can feel sure, without fear of being deceived, that the good exceeds them in dignity." *Republic,* Bk. VII, 517, D.

6) Modern Voluntarists, such as Secrétan, maintain that *liberty* is what formally constitutes the divine nature. For absolute being to be *its own reason for what it is* (*ratio sui*), according to Secrétan, it must be absolute liberty, liberty of second potency, free to be free. "As substance, it gives itself existence; as living, it gives itself substance; as spirit, it gives itself life; as absolute, it gives itself liberty. . . . The finite spirit is both spirit and nature, and not merely spirit. It would be the perfection of the spirit to be a pure spirit, having nothing material. The pure spirit consists only in what it does, which means that it is absolute liberty. . . . *I am what I wish.* This formula is therefore the factotum." [12] Lequier, too, had to admit that the fundamental truth in the deductive order, the truth which is the principle upon which all others are based, is the fact of divine liberty, since for him the fundamental truth in the order of invention is not the principle of identity, but the fact of human liberty. He also maintains with Secrétan that God willed to restrict His foreknowledge with regard to our acts so as to leave us free.[13] Boutroux held and taught a similar view. "In God, power or liberty is infinite; it is the source of His existence and what comes from it is not subject to the constraint of fatality. The divine essence co-eternal with its power is actual perfection. Its necessity is that of the practical order, that is, it ought to be realized, and cannot be itself, unless it freely becomes a reality." [14] Not long ago in Germany, Dr. Hermann Schell held that God is not only *ratio sui,* but *causa sui.*

It is difficult to conceive of other ways of solving the problem as to what formally constitutes the divine essence. Priority is given

[12] *La Philosophie de la liberté,* 2d ed., Vol. I, Bk. XV, pp. 361–370.

[13] See Lequier, *La Recherche d'une vérité première* (*fragments posthumes*), pp. 82–85.

[14] *Contingence des lois de la nature,* 3d ed., p. 156.

either to *Being* or to the *Good* or to the *Infinite* or to *intellection* or to *liberty*. Whether we consider in God what is subjective or what is objective, no other answers than these can be found.

43) *Neither free will nor the good is what formally constitutes the divine nature.*

It is easy to explain why Scholastic philosophy never thought of saying that liberty is what formally constitutes the divine essence. In fact, it is difficult to conceive liberty as being prior to intelligence. Even Secrétan admits this without seeming to suspect that this acknowledgment means the very ruin of his libertarian system. "Liberty without intelligence is impossible," he says, "it would be mistaken for chance, which latter is not a species of causality but its negation. . . . It would be a potency which of itself would unconsciously determine the law according to which it becomes a reality. That is a contradiction in terms. No, the free being is intelligent. It is useless to dwell on this point." [15] "But, on the contrary," remarks Pillon on this subject, in his criticism of this philosophy, "it is of great importance to dwell on this point," for we must say whether, in the Absolute, liberty is dependent upon intelligence as it is with us—and this would be the ruination of Secrétan's system—or, if the reverse is true, "whether absolute freedom cannot be distinguished from this radical contingency which they tell us is the negation of causality. That is the dilemma which must be faced and which really deserves some notice. Secrétan passes over it without making the least effort to escape from it." [16] Whereas we cannot think of liberty without deliberation of the intellect, we can conceive of intellect apart from liberty. First comes the intellect, and liberty, as we shall see, is derived from it. Besides, the Libertarian thesis leads one to hold with Ockham and Descartes, that by a purely arbitrary decree God has

[15] *La Philosophie de la liberté*, 2d ed., Vol. I, lesson 17, p. 403.
[16] Pillon, *La Philosophie de Secrétan*, p. 33.

distinguished good from evil. St. Thomas looked upon this doctrine as blasphemous.[17] It is "dishonoring" God, as Leibniz says. "Why should not God be, therefore, just as well the principle of evil which the Manichaeans believed in, as the principle of good of orthodox thinkers?" [18]

It is no less contradictory to maintain that God is *cause of Himself*. For a thing to cause, it must exist, "for nothing can be the sufficient cause of its own existence, if its existence is caused," says St. Thomas (Ia, q. 3, a. 4). God can only be *ratio sui* (His own sufficient reason), inasmuch as His essence in its formal concept implies actual existence; now this is precisely what is meant by *aseity*. God is *a se*, of Himself, without being cause of Himself. Likewise, in the order of invention, the principle of causality is not the ultimate principle. It is but a principle derived from that of sufficient reason, and this latter refers back to the principle of identity.

Neither can we admit that the Good is what formally constitutes the divine essence. St. Thomas (Ia, q. 5, a. 2: *"Whether goodness is prior in idea to being."*) proves that *being* has a logical priority over the good. The formal concept of goodness adds something to that of being. Goodness is being that has reached its fullness and perfection, that is capable of appealing to the appetitive faculty, as something desirable, of arousing one's love for it, of perfecting one, and of making one happy. *The good is what all seek for.* In a word, the good is being inasmuch as it is desirable, and it is virtuous good that is meant, for which we are by nature ordained in our actions. It is being inasmuch as it is what *must* be desired. For this reason, the notion of good is less simple, hence less independent, less absolute, less universal than the notion of being. Being does not presuppose the good; it is the good that

[17] *De veritate*, q. 23, a. 6: "To say that justice depends simply on the will, is to say that the divine will does not act according to wisdom, and this is blasphemy."

[18] Leibniz, *Theodicy*, II, sec. 176 f.

presupposes being, and this latter is the first of notions. We shall see that God is the sovereign Good only because He is the plenitude of being, the self-subsisting Being. In the same way, intellect which receives its specification from being, is superior to the will which receives its specification from the good, and that is why the intellect directs the will.[19]

But if *in itself* and *absolutely* (*simpliciter*) being is prior to goodness, *in a certain sense* (*secundum quid*), goodness is prior to being. The explanation given by St. Thomas is as follows: "From the point of view of causality, goodness is prior to being. But goodness, since it has the aspect of desirable, implies the idea of a final cause, the causality of which is first among causes, since an agent does not act except for some end; and by an agent matter is moved to its form. Thus goodness, as a cause, is prior to being, as is the end to the form. It is for this reason that Dionysius (*De div. nom.*, ch. v), among the names signifying the divine causality or the relation of God to creatures, gives good priority over being" (Ia, q. 5, a. 2 ad 1um). Wherefore, *for us*, or *in the causal relations* which He establishes with us, God is, first of all, the good God, Goodness itself: for *good is essentially diffusive of itself*. And this sums up all the truth contained in the famous passage we have quoted from Plato's Republic. But if we consider God as *He is in Himself* and as He is related to us, He is pre-eminently Being itself. Being is, in itself and absolutely so, prior to good.

It is by this profound distinction that St. Thomas reconciles his doctrine with that of the Augustinians, who instead of considering the object of theology as it is in itself, considered it *as it is related to us*, in that it is the object of the appetitive faculty or of the will, and of its two acts of *fruition* and of *use*. In Peter Lombard's *Sentences* this relative aspect of the object of theology is made the principle in distinguishing between God and created things. In the *Sentences*, God is primarily the being which for us cannot be

[19] See Ia, q. 82, a. 3: "Whether the will is a higher power than the intellect."

the means, but which must be the source of our joy, whereas created things serve as the means by which we attain to eternal happiness. On the other hand, in the *Summa theologica,* St. Thomas considers the object of theology *as it is in itself,* in which God is primarily the First Being. "As far as our intellect can judge of the matter, goodness, action, and desire belong essentially to being, and are modes of being. It is impossible for us to say that being is a mode of the good and of action. It is the ontological concept of being which comprises the dynamic concept, and not vice versa." [20]

That St. Augustine and St. Thomas held opposite opinions on this point, has been far too much exaggerated, we think, in these latter times.[21] It is particularly from the psychological and moral standpoint that St. Augustine considers the object of theology, whereas St. Thomas considers the object from the metaphysical point of view. In this there is no contradiction, but subordination of views. The way in which St. Thomas reconciles these two points of view, is by distinguishing, as we have just explained, between God considered either as He is in Himself or only as He is related to us.

44) *Does being itself or subsistent thought formally constitute the divine nature?*

In determining God's nature, St. Thomas (Ia, q. 3) begins by proving that God is *pure Spirit,*[22] and that He is *Being itself.*[23]

[20] Cf. Gardeil, *Du donné révélé à la théologie,* pp. 279–284; also his article "Bien" in the *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique.* In his *Du donné révélé à la théologie,* Gardeil insists more on the difference between the Augustinian and Thomistic points of view, without excluding the possibility of reconciling these views.

[21] We find this same exaggeration in various articles published in the *Annales de philosophie chrétienne,* 1905–1913. The same may be said of certain historians of the Thomistic school of thought, whose viewpoint differs from that advocated by the *Annales.*

[22] See Ia, q. 3, a. 1: "Whether God is a body"; a. 2: "Whether God is composed of matter and form."

[23] See Ia, q. 3, a. 4: "Whether essence and existence are the same in God."

This, we think, solves the problem which confronts us. God is *pure Spirit*. How could He have a body? However perfect this body might be, however subtle, delicate, and endowed with vitality, the divine soul which gave it life would still be the nobler part. We should have to say, therefore, that there is something imperfect and limited in God. This body would not be life, but only a participation in life.[24] This body would not be the prime mover, the principle of all motion, but would itself be set in motion.[25] This body would not be the principle of all order in the universe, but would itself require an organizing principle.[26] Finally, this body would constitute with the divine soul a composite, more perfect than the parts. But, for the elements of a composite to be united, a cause is required (see n. 26). The First Being, as we have said, must be absolutely simple,[27] simpler than a perfect diamond, and therefore must be pure spirit.

This prime being is without organs of sense perception, sees not with the eyes but in a purely spiritual manner. It has no passions or emotions, but a love which is entirely spiritual. Only in a metaphorical sense can we, to express the strictness of its justice, speak of it as being angry.

In this life we can have no positive concept of this spirit, except by denoting it in terms borrowed from corporeal things, as when we say that it is a substance and that it acts. But we can have only a negative and relative knowledge, derived from objects of sense experience, of what properly constitutes this being as such. In a negative way, we say of this being that it is incorporeal and immaterial, which means that it is without a body and without matter. In a relative way we try to define this being, referring to what is nobler in the sensible order, comparing it to light, as when

[24] This would be an open contradiction of the fourth proof of God's existence.
[25] Contrary to the conclusion of the first proof of God's existence.
[26] This would be a denial of the conclusion established by the fifth proof of God's existence.
[27] See the fourth proof of God's existence.

we say that it is a bright light, at the same time remarking that its light is of a higher order than material light. Though we know quite well that a spirit has no spatial dimensions, yet, by way of analogy, we attribute dimensions to it, as when we speak of a high-minded person, a profound intellect, an intellect of wide range, one so vast that it sees things from on high and from afar. By way of analogy with the resistance of material objects, we speak of a firm mind, or of one that is inconstant, yielding, or subtle. When we wish to designate an unusual subtlety of mind, we speak of the sharpness of the intellect.

Even though we were to know definitely what constitutes a pure spirit, we should still be in ignorance of what formally constitutes the divine nature. In fact, it is possible for a pure spirit to be created; our created intellect is of the purely spiritual order, and faith tells us of the existence of angels. But a speck of dust compared with an angel is not so insignificant as an angel compared with God. Whether we consider the vast number of angels in the heavenly choirs, or the numerous suns of the nebulae, or the innumerable grains of sand on the seashore, all of these, in a sense, are equally infinitesimal compared with God. What separates a speck of dust from God is infinity, and between an angel and God the difference is also infinity.

By what name, then, shall we truly designate God, if it does not suffice to say of Him that He is pure Spirit? God Himself has told us His name. He revealed it to Moses from the midst of the burning bush: "Moses said to God: Lo, I shall go to the children of Israel, and say to them: The God of your fathers hath sent me to you. If they should say to me: What is His name? what shall I say to them? God said to Moses: *I am who am*. Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel. *He who is* has sent me to you" (Exod. 3:13, 14). The Hebrew word "Yahveh," from which the word "Jehovah" is derived, is the equivalent of "He who is." "This is my

name forever, and this is my memorial unto all generations."[28] We come across the same words in the last book of the New Testament (Apoc. 1:4, 8): "I am Alpha and Omega, saith the Lord, *who is* and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." Thus God revealed Himself to His saints, as He did, for instance, to St. Catherine, when He said to her: "I am He who is, thou art who art not."

God is not only pure spirit, He is *Being itself, that subsists immaterial as such above all created things,* not subject to any of the limitations that can be imposed on beings by space, matter, or any of the finite spiritual essences. The fourth proof of God's existence, based on the degrees of being, makes this point quite clear. (See n. 39.)

From the standpoint of our imperfect knowledge, is it not true that self-subsisting Being, or *Actus purus,* as Aristotle termed it, is the formal constituent of the divine essence? It seems easy to prove this.[29]

The formal constituent of the divine nature, according to our imperfect mode of knowing it, is what we conceive in God as being the fundamental principle that distinguishes Him from creatures, and that is the source of His attributes. Now, since God is self-subsisting Being, He is fundamentally distinct from everything created, and all absolute perfections must be attributed to Him. Therefore, self-subsisting Being is the formal constituent of the divine nature.

This doctrine is explained by the very prominence which St. Thomas gives to the fundamental proposition: *"The divine essence is the self-subsisting existence, the self-subsisting Being."* The article in which this question is discussed[30] is the terminus in the

[28] Exod. 3:15.

[29] See Gotti, O.P., *De Deo,* II, dub. 3; also Contenson, O.P., *De Deo,* diss. 2, ch. ii; Zigliara, O.P., *Summa phil. theol.,* Bk. II, ch. i.

[30] St. Thomas, Ia, q. 3, a. 4.

ascendent order of metaphysical reasoning, the culminating point of the five ways by which we prove the existence of God who is distinct from the world. This article also gives us the principle in the descendent process of metaphysical reasoning, or of that method by which we deduce the divine attributes and establish in what way the world is related to God.

The *prime mover,* as we have said, must be its very own activity and, being *Actus purus* in the operative order, it must be so also in the entitative order; for the mode of operation follows the mode of being. Its essence, therefore, is not only capable of existing, it is its *very Being.*

St. Thomas is more explicit when he says: "Existence is that which makes every form or nature actual; for goodness and humanity are spoken of as actual, only because they are spoken of as existing. Therefore existence must be compared to essence, if the latter is a distinct reality, as actuality to potentiality."[31] And since in God there is no potentiality, as shown above, it follows that in Him the essence does not differ from existence.

The *first cause* must find within itself the reason of its own existence. But it cannot cause itself, for to do so it would have to be already in existence. Therefore it did not receive existence, but is this very existence.[32]

Necessary being implies existence as an essential predicate, which means that it must not only have existence, but that it must be its very existence.

The supreme being, absolutely simple and perfect, could not participate in existence, but must be *essentially Being;* therefore there could be no distinction in it of an essence as limiting and of an existence as limited,[33] of an essence as capable of existence and of an existence as actualizing or determining this essence.

[31] See Ia, q. 3, a. 4, ratio 2a.
[32] *Ibid.,* ratio 1a.
[33] *Ibid.,* ratio 3a.

The first intelligence, which directs all things to their ends, cannot be itself directed to being, as to an object distinct from itself; it must be Being itself always actually known to itself.

As we have said, such is the conclusion to which we come from the proofs of God's existence, a conclusion which constitutes the fundamental principle of the distinction between God and the world. This distinction comes first to our notice from the fact that God is *immutable,* and the world is subject to change (first, second, and third proofs). It is confirmed by the fact that God is absolutely *simple* and *perfect,* whereas the world is composite and imperfect (fourth and fifth proofs). Its definite formula and ultimate claim to recognition come from the fact that God is *He who is, Being itself,* whereas everything else which exists is by its very nature only capable of existing, and is a composite of essence and existence.[34] It is clear that no created being can be self-existent; even when actually existing, it is only *contingent* or non-essential existence that can be *predicated* of it. This existence is really distinct from the actual essence in which it is received and by which it is limited. "*Along with the essence given by God, He produces that which the essence receives.*" [35]

This real distinction, which is beyond the scope of the senses or of experience, is imposed upon human reason so as to enable it to decide the arguments advanced by Parmenides against the multiplicity of beings. This multiplicity is a fact, and cannot be explained except by admitting a limiting principle, which is that of real and created essence. In fact, existence cannot of itself be multi-

[34] St. Thomas, Ia, q. 7, a. 1 ad 3um: "From the fact that the *being of God is self-subsisting, not received in any other,* and is thus called infinite, this shows Him to be distinguished from all other beings and all others to be apart from Him. Even so, were there such a thing as a *self-subsisting whiteness,* the very fact that it did not exist in anything else, would make it distinct from every other whiteness existing *in a subject.*" See also Michel, art. "Essence" in the *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique.* Cf. Hugon, O.P., *Cursus phil.,* V, 15 ff., 25 ff., 46 f., 71 ff.

[35] St. Thomas, *De potentia,* q. 3, a. 1 ad 17um.

plied, but only in so far as it is received in essences capable of existing, just as the form is multiplied only in so far as it is received in matter.[36] This composite of essence and existence is the principle of the imperfection and the mutability in created things. It presupposes that the notion of being as such is not *univocal* (as Scotus maintained),[37] but *analogous* (Ia, q. 13, a. 5). Only in this sense can it be said that real essence, a potentiality which in receiving existence limits the same, is a part of *being,* though it is not existence. Being is predicated analogically or in a different way, of these two elements which constitute created being. Thus sensation and intellection are spoken of as knowledge, though the connotation is essentially different in each case, as also when the term is applied to the thought of created beings and of the uncreated Being.

To declare, on the contrary, that the notion of being as such is univocal, makes impossible any explanation of the fact of the multiplicity of beings, and thus obliges the acceptance of Monism, as St. Thomas remarked of Parmenides; and the same may be said of Spinoza, the modern Parmenides. The old philosopher of Elis, as also Spinoza, was of the opinion that being is univocal, and from this he concluded the unicity of both being and sub-

[36] See St. Thomas, Ia, q. 44, a. 1: "It must be said that every being in any way existing is from God. For whatever is found in anything by participation, must be caused in it by that to which it belongs essentially, as iron becomes ignited by fire. Now it has been shown (q. 3, a. 4), when treating of the divine simplicity, that God is the essentially *self-subsisting Being.* And also it was shown (q. 11, a. 4) that subsisting being must be one: as, if whiteness were self-subsisting, it would be one, *since whiteness is multiplied by its recipients. Therefore all beings apart from God are not their own being, but are beings by participation.*" See also *Contra Gentes,* Bk. II, ch. lii. *De ente et essentia,* chs. 5, 6; *De veritate,* q. 27, a. 1 ad 8um: "Everything which is of the genus of substance, is made up of parts which unite to form a real composite . . . at least of *essence and existence* (*ex esse et quod est*)." For other texts of St. Thomas, see Del Prado, *De veritate fundamentali philosophiae christianae,* pp. 24–30.

[37] See Scotus (*Oxford*), I, d. 3, q. 2, n. 5 ff. Cf. also the other texts of Scotus in his *Summa theologica Joannis Scoti,* edited by Montefortino, Ia, q. 13, a. 5.

stance. St. Thomas reduced the Eleatic argument to this syllogism: A thing that is simple cannot be diversified by itself, but only by something other than itself. Now being as such is simple; and what is not being, is nothing. Therefore, being cannot be diversified, and so there is only one being.

To this objection St. Thomas replies as follows: "The mistake which Parmenides made was in believing that being, like a genus, is univocal. But, as a matter of fact, being is not a genus, and is predicated of the different types of being in very different senses." [38] If it were a genus, like animality, it could be diversified only by differences which would be extrinsic to it, and since what is not being is nothing, there is no way by which it could be diversified.

As a matter of fact, being is analogous, and the only unity it has is that of proportion, like that of the word "know," which denotes either sense perception in its relation to the sensible object, or intellectual perception in its relation to the intelligible object. From this point of view, being as such contains actually and implicitly the various modes by which being is diversified. It is predicated, but with very different meanings, of potentiality and of act, and also of created things which are composites consisting of potentiality and of act, and it is also predicated of pure act.

Certain theologians, following Scotus, reject the real distinction between essence and existence in created things, and cause the analogy of being to be merged in univocity.[39] It is not surprising that the Thomists consider that these theologians thus undermine

[38] The comment of St. Thomas (*Metaphysica,* Bk. I, ch. v, lesson 9) is as follows: "In this Parmenides erred, in that he always referred to being as if it had *one meaning* and *one nature,* as is the case with genus. But this is impossible. For being is not a genus, but is predicated of *various things and in many different senses.*

[39] Suarez, *Disp. Met.,* disp. 2, sec. 2, n. 34. See also *infra,* at the end of ch. iii.

the distinction between God and the world and prepare the way for Pantheism.[40]

On the other hand, by at once admitting these fundamental and essentially connected truths,[41] we avoid all forms of Pantheism as well as the theory of those who say that we are modes of the divine essence, and the theory of those who make God the formal principle by which all beings are determined.

It is truly impossible to conceive the divine essence as passing through a process of evolution and enriching itself by the acquisition of new modes of being. God is being itself, completely determined, and therefore incapable of further determination (Ia, q. 3, a. 6).

It is equally absurd to maintain that God is the formal principle by which all beings are determined. In that case these beings would participate in His nature, as matter participates in the form (Ia, q. 3, a. 8). He would constitute with these beings a composite more perfect than Himself.

God cannot be the subject of the material or spiritual changes

[40] Cf. Del Prado, *De veritate fundamentali philosophiae christianae*, a criticism of the principles of the metaphysics of Suarez (chs. ix–xi); John of St. Thomas, O.P., *Cursus phil., Phil. nat.*, q. 7, a. 4; Hugon, O.P., *Cursus phil.*, V, 67. See also De Maria, S.J., *Ontologia* (tr., I, q. 1, a. 5); Cardinal Billot, S.J., *De Deo* and *De Verbo incarnato, passim;* Michel, art. "Essence" in the *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique.*

[41] St. Thomas (*De potentia*, q. 7, a. 7) says: "The diversity of reference to *existence* in created things prevents us from predicating being univocally of them. God is His own existence, which cannot be said of anything created."

Objection might be made, that all danger of Pantheism is sufficiently avoided by admitting that being is analogous, and that we need not go futher than this and admit a real distinction between essence and existence in created beings.

In truth, the analogy of being suffices in explaining the diversification of the different essences viewed as merely possible: but when we consider this same analogy in beings which actually exist, or between the essence and the existence, in each of them, it demands a real distinction between essence and existence, since existence is but a *contingent and non-essential* predicate of created being. To deny this distinction is to be brought to the alternative of maintaining that existence is an essential predicate of everything which exists; hence, everything which exists is identified with God.

which we observe in the world, nor can He be the formal law of these changes. His relations with the world cannot be those of immanent cause but only of *extrinsic* cause, both efficient and final (Ia, q. 3, a. 8).

Spinoza admitted only an immanent cause for the origin of the world, because of his theory of absolute realism by which he maintained that universal being exists as such apart from spirit. Thus he confuses being as such with the divine Being, at the same time admitting both the univocity and unicity of being. Another reason for this view held by Spinoza was that he unjustly applied to metaphysics that process of reasoning which belongs to mathematics.

This latter science, which is concerned only with quantity, rightly abstracts [42] from sensible qualities, as well as from efficient and final causality. This cannot be the case with that science which is concerned only with being and which considers individual things in so far as they have being, and in so far as they come into existence and are kept in existence. This science must seek for the efficient and final cause of these beings. (See also Appendix III: "The Various Kinds of Pantheism Refuted by St. Thomas.")

Being itself is finally the principle of all the divine attributes. Despite what Scotus says, this principle could not consist in radical infinity or in the exigency of all possible perfections. For we cannot conceive of this exigency apart from a subject whose essence precisely calls for all perfections.

In the "question" treating of the Perfection of God, St. Thomas clearly explains what is the foundation of this exigency. (Ia, q. 4, a. 2). "God is existence itself, of itself subsistent. Consequently He must contain within Himself the whole perfection of being. For it is clear that if some hot thing has not the whole perfection of heat, this is because heat is not participated in its full perfec-

[42] See Aristotle, *Metaph.*, Bk. VI, ch. i; St. Thomas' commentary, lect. 1.

tion; but if this heat were self-subsisting, nothing of the virtue of heat would be wanting to it. Since therefore God is subsisting being itself, nothing of the perfection of being can be wanting to Him. All created perfections, however, are included in the perfection of being; for things are perfect, precisely in so far as they have being after some fashion. It follows, therefore, that no perfection is wanting to God. This line of argument, too, is implied by Dionysius in his *De divinis nominibus* (ch. v), when he says: *God exists not in any single mode, but embraces all being in Himself, absolutely, without limitation.*" Being itself demands all perfections, both those of the operative order and those of the entitative order, since operation presupposes being. In the discussion which follows we shall see how each particular attribute is deduced from subsistent Being.

Thought or subsistent intellection, since that is merely the basis of those perfections pertaining to the intellect and to the will, cannot be taken as the principle upon which we base this derivation. The derivation of these attributes is based upon the immateriality of the divine Being (Ia, q. 14, a. 1). God is intelligence because He is the absolutely immaterial Being. Moreover, intelligence presupposes an intelligible object, and the supremely intelligible is none other than Being itself, which contains virtually all possible beings viewed as so many analogical reflections of itself, somewhat after the manner of light which contains virtually all colors. Hence St. Thomas does not study the question of God's knowledge of Himself until he has discussed the attributes relating to the divine Being, and has touched upon those relating to the divine operations.[43]

From the fact that intellection denotes the highest degree of being, above all that is corporeal, and all forms of vegetative and sensitive life, we cannot conclude that it is what formally constitutes the divine nature. In fact, what constitutes the divine

[43] See Ia, q. 14, prologue.

nature, is not a degree of being however noble, but it must be that which is presupposed in every being, the very self-subsisting Being in all the plenitude of its being.[44]

With regard to the Hebrew tetragrammaton Yahveh (or Jehovah), St. Thomas (Ia, q. 13, a. 11), with his usual precision of thought, says: "This name, *He who is,* is most properly applied to God, for three reasons:

"*First,* because of its signification. For it does not signify form, but simply existence itself. Hence since the existence of God is His essence itself, which can be said of no other, it is clear that among other names this one specially denominates God.

"*Secondly,* on account of its universality. For all other divine names are either less universal than *'He who is'* or, if convertible with it, add something above it at least in idea; hence in a certain way they inform it and determine it. Now our intellect cannot know the essence of God itself in this life, as it is in itself; but whatever mode it applies in determining what it understands about God, it falls short of what God is in Himself. Therefore the less determinate the names are, and the more universal and absolute they are, the more properly are they applied to God. Hence Damascene[45] says: *'He who is, is the principal of all names applied to God; for comprehending all in itself, it contains existence itself as an infinite and indeterminate sea of substance.'* Now by any other name some mode of substance is

[44] St. Thomas (Ia, q. 4, a. 2 ad 3um) has this to say: "Although therefore *existence* does not include life and wisdom, because that which participates in existence need not participate in every mode of existence, nevertheless *God's existence* includes in itself life and wisdom, because nothing of the perfection of being can be wanting to Him who is *subsisting being itself.*" Again (Ia IIae, q. 2, a. 5 ad 2um) we read: "*Being* taken simply as including all perfection of being, surpasses life and all that follows it. . . . But if we consider being itself as participated in this or that thing (in a stone), then it is evident that being itself together with an additional perfection is more excellent." See also *Sentences,* Ia, dist. 8, q. 1, a. 1, 8; *De potentia,* q. 8, a. 2 ad 9um. Cf. also Gotti, *De Deo* tr. II, dub. 3, sec. 3; and Contenson, *De Deo,* diss. 2, ch. ii, spec. 2.

[45] *De fide orthodoxa,* Bk. I, ch. xii.

determined, whereas the name He who is, determines no mode of being, but is indeterminate to all, and therefore it denominates the *infinite ocean of substance.*

"*Thirdly,* from its consignification, for it signifies present existence; and this above all properly applies to God, whose existence knows not past or future, as Augustine says (*De Trinitate, V*)."

Finally, no matter what the modern idealists may say, all the theologians admit priority of being over thought. This latter, from both the subjective and the objective points of view, can be defined only by reason of its reference to being. Thought is the thought of a thinking being, and its tendency is for the being thought of.

In the passage in which Aristotle discusses the *νόησις νοήσεως νόησις*, the thinking on thinking (*Met.*, XII, ch. ix), he shows that the perfection of intellection consists precisely in this, that it receives its specification from the intelligible object. "What proves this," he says, "is that there are things which it is better not to know." To know them is not a perfection. Hence perfection of knowledge depends upon the dignity of the thing that is known. Also pure Act is considered by Aristotle to be the very first intelligible, *τὸ πρῶτον νοητόν* (*Met.*, XII, ch. vii). It is the objective *νόησις* more so than the eternal act of intellection, which has for its object this supreme intelligible. In this we recognize the old objectivism.

Whereas being is an absolute of direct apprehension, intelligence cannot be conceived except as something which is vitally related to being. Our very first idea *in the order of invention,* is the idea of being; our very first principle is the principle of identity, which enunciates what applies primarily to *being,* that *"a being is what it is and cannot be what it is not."* In the *synthetic or deductive order, in via judicii,* it is this first principle of identity which is the fundamental truth. It is that which ultimately

explains all other things, and which is the answer to our final inquiries about God and the world. But it is now expressed in the following form: *"I am who am and cannot not be."* As Father Del Prado has shown in his treatise *De veritate fundamentali philosophiae christianae,*[46] of such a nature is this principle that it constitutes the corner-stone of the treatise on God. It is the terminus of the proof of God's existence, and the starting-point in the deduction of the divine attributes. Along with the principle of identity implied in the first of our ideas, which is that of being, there is needed a being in whom essence is identical with existence, one who is pure being, without any admixture of potentiality, without limitation, who is to being as A is to A, in whom the principle of identity is completely realized and who is Being instead of simply *having* being: *"I am He who is"* (Exod., ch. iii).

By making intelligence dependent upon truth or upon being, we depart from the absolute intellectualism of Leibniz. As Boutroux remarks (*La Monadologie,* p. 84), "Leibniz, taking the modern point of view of the glorification of personality, considers intelligence . . . the indispensable substratum of truth."[47] It may well be questioned whether Leibniz' absolute intellectualism, *in which liberty is stripped of everything but the name,* does not logically result in Hegel's absolute idealism, *which relegates being to thought,* and hence consigns what is to what must be, liberty to necessity, actual fact to right, success to morality.[48] If we take this view of the question, we are obliged to make "becoming" the fundamental reality, and thus deny the objective validity of the principle of non-contradiction, which therefore

[46] Published in 1911.

[47] Cf. Leibniz, *Opera philosophica,* Erdmann ed., 562, b.

[48] As Ollé-Laprune remarks in his *Raison et le Rationalisme,* the Rationalistic thesis is based on the principle that *being refers to thought,* and not thought to being, or reason to being. Such reasoning results in the denial both of liberty and of the claims of divine faith.

ceases to be the norm for the reasoning mind and its abstractions. St. Thomas, as we shall see later on, by maintaining that the will is subordinate to the intellect, avoids the error of psychological determinism; for he is more emphatic than Leibniz in affirming the dependence of the intellect upon being. If being, conceived as an absolute, is prior to intelligence conceived as related to being, then what the real denotes need not be positively intelligible and of itself predetermined, in order that the transition from Being itself to the existence of this world by means of creation, and the transitions from the infinite to the finite, from the one to the multiple, from the universal to the particular, be deduced from the principle of sufficient reason. Intellectualism limits itself when it claims to be a *realism,* and when it distinguishes in being—which it regards as prior to thought—two elements, one completely intelligible (act), and the other (potency) thoroughly obscure for the intellect, but necessary so as to enable it to solve the arguments advanced by Parmenides and also to explain multiplicity and becoming in terms of being. At present we cannot insist further on the importance of these notions, but we will return to the subject in chapter four.

Therefore we conclude that self-subsisting Being is what formally constitutes the divine nature, according to our imperfect way of knowing it. This thesis is confirmed by the fact that the attributes are derived from the self-subsisting Being. These attributes are in this Being, not merely in a virtual manner (as properties are contained virtually in the created essence from which they are derived), but in an *actual* and *implicit* manner, although not as yet *explicitly* expressed. That is why the Thomists and almost all theologians say there is only a virtual and minor distinction between the divine attributes and the divine essence.[49] Since, in speaking thus of the divine essence, we do not simply mean to imply our imperfect mode of knowing it,

[49] See Billuart, *De Deo,* diss. 2, a. 3.

but the divine essence as it is in itself, then we must say that in the eminence of the *Deity,* according to what properly and intrinsically constitutes it as such, are contained all the divine perfections *actually* and *explicitly,*[50] and that there is no distinction between them except those made by the human mind. That is why St. Thomas (Ia, q. 13, a. 11 ad 1um) says: "The name *God* is more proper than the name *He who is,* as regards the object intended by the name, as it is imposed to signify the divine nature."[51]

Between the divine essence and the attributes there is no mental distinction either for God or for the blessed who contemplate Him face to face. The intimate life of the Deity in its eminent simplicity is the immediate object of the beatific vision.[52]

Sanctifying grace is a physical, formal, and analogical participation of the divine nature. If in this life we had such a knowledge of grace that we could say in what it intimately consists, we should then have a certain knowledge of what intimately constitutes the divine nature. There is resemblance by way of analogy, between inanimate beings and God, in so far as He is being; between living beings and God, in so far as He is living; between intelligent beings and God, in so far as He is intelligent. That is why we say that beings are made to God's image (Ia, q. 93, a. 2). By the supernatural life of grace we are like unto God, precisely in this that He is God, and we thus participate in the intimate life of the Deity according to the strict acceptation of the term. Hence St. Thomas says: "The least degree of sanctifying grace in the soul of a single man or infant is incomparably more precious than all created beings both corporeal and spir-

[50] *Ibid.,* diss. 2, a. 2.

[51] Gotti, in his *De Deo* (tr. II, q. 3, dub. 3, 20), says that the word "man" is more proper than the expression "rational animal"; for this term is used to designate human nature and not the elements which constitute it.

[52] See Billuart, *De Deo,* diss. 2, a. 3, appendix. This view is at least the most probable one.

itual." "The good of grace in one is greater than the good of nature in the whole universe" (Ia IIae, q. 113, a. 9 ad 2um).

Pascal likewise says: "The least of minds is greater than all material objects, the firmament, the stars, the earth and its kingdoms; for the mind has knowledge of all these things and of itself; whereas things material have no knowledge at all. Bodies and minds, all these taken together and the effects produced by them, do not equal the least act of charity. This latter is of an infinitely higher order. From the sum-total of material things, there could not possibly issue one little thought, because thought is of another order. From bodies and minds we cannot possibly have an act of true charity, for the latter, too, is of another order, pertaining to the supernatural. The saints have their realm, their glory, their victory, their luster, and have no need of temporal or spiritual aggrandisement, which in no way affects them, neither increasing nor decreasing their greatness. The saints are seen by God and the angels, not by bodies or by curious minds. God suffices for them." [53]

Sanctity, which is the life of grace having reached its perfection, is a participation of the intimate life of God, of that which properly constitutes the Deity such as it is in itself.

[53] Pascal, *Pensées* (Havet ed.), art. XVIII, 1.

CHAPTER II

The Derivation of the Attributes from Self-subsisting Being

45) *Notion, division, and derivation in general of the attributes.*

The expression "divine attribute," in its strict sense, is usually defined as an absolutely simple perfection which exists necessarily and formally in God and which, according to our imperfect mode of knowing it, is deduced from what we conceive as constituting the divine essence.

God's free acts and the real relations which constitute the Trinity of divine persons are not attributes in the strict sense of the term. Of course, any perfection (such as rationality or animality) which essentially includes imperfection cannot be called a divine attribute. These mixed perfections are not in God *formally* but only *virtually,* in that He can bring them into existence. Maimonides and the Agnostics erred in claiming that even absolute perfections exist in God only virtually. From this point of view, we should have no more right to attribute intelligence to God, than to attribute animality or materiality to Him (Ia, q. 13, a. 2). Nothing is opposed to God except in so far as it is an imperfection.

St. Thomas [1] considers first those divine attributes which refer to the being of God, and then those which concern His operations. *The attributes which relate to God's very being* are, first of all, those properties belonging to being as such and considered in the highest degree of their perfection. They are simplicity or

[1] See Ia, q. 3, prologue, and q. 14, prologue.

unity, truth, goodness or perfection. Then come infinity which excludes any limitation of essence, immensity and omnipresence which exclude spatial limitation, eternity which excludes all time limitation; finally, with regard to our natural knowledge, the being of God is invisible, and it is incomprehensible, yet able to be known by analogy with created things.

In *the attributes which relate to the divine operations,* a division is made between those referring to the immanent divine operations and those which are causes of an effect external to God.[2] To the former class belong, on the part of the intellect, wisdom and providence; and on the part of the will, love and its two great virtues of mercy and justice. The immediate principle of the external divine effects is omnipotence, both creative and conservative, upon which depends the divine concurrence which is necessary for all beings to enable them to act and attain their end.

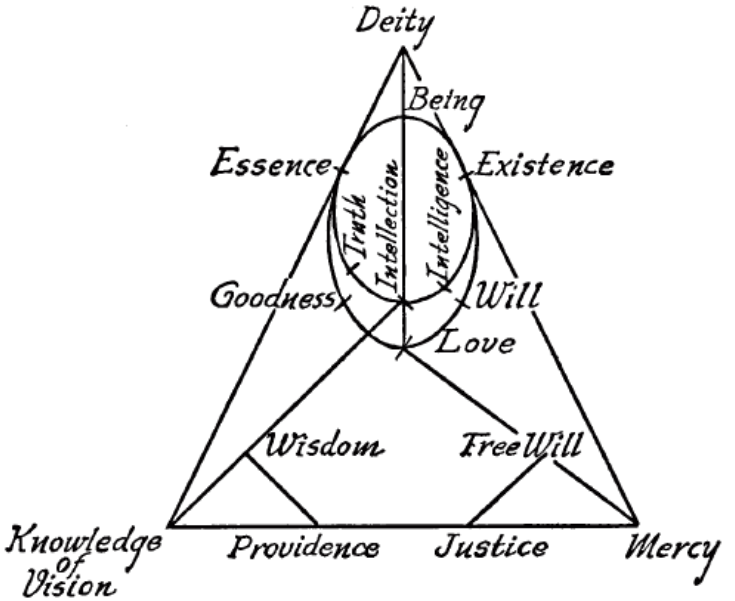
Such is the main division of the divine attributes. From a secondary point of view and more as regards the mode of our knowledge, we distinguish between positive and negative attributes. In fact, there are some perfections expressed by terms that are positive in form but negative in implication, such as simplicity, which is the negation of composition. On the other hand, there are attributes expressed by terms which are negative in form (such as infinity), but which denote a positive perfection.

Anyone who has duly considered the orderly arrangement of the questions in the treatise on God, which forms part of St. Thomas' *Summa theologica,* can easily enough, by following this order closely, derive all the attributes from the self-subsisting Being.

We will give a general outline of the derivation of these attributes. After that we will consider each of them in turn and endeavor to solve the seeming antinomies which confront one in

[2] See Ia, q. 14, prologue.

the reconciliation of these attributes. The derivation of the attributes may be summed up by the following diagram.[3]



If unity, truth, and goodness (see Vol. I, nn. 18, 20, 29) are transcendental properties of being as such, which transcends or dominates species and genera, then the *self-subsisting Being* must be absolutely one (simple and unique, Ia, q. 3, 11). More than just intelligible, He must be Truth itself, or the first intelligible, *τὸ πρῶτον νοητόν* (*Met.*, XII, ch. vii; Ia, q. 16).[4]

[3] This diagram gives the main positive attributes as these are related to the supreme Being and to the Deity. The names grouped around the curves denote the attributes which would exist, even if nothing else did or could exist. The other attributes are considered in their relations to created things, either actual or possible. The triangle by which the figure is bounded is the ordinary symbol of the Trinity. The three angles are really distinct and yet each of the same dimensions. They are equal (or should be regarded as equal) and are essentially related to one another.

[4] In this general derivation of the attributes we have adhered closely to the order of the questions as presented by St. Thomas in the *Summa theologica.*

Having plenitude of being, He is also the *sovereign good,* capable of attracting to Himself the primary desirable, τὸ πρῶτον ὀρεκτόν, the one who constitutes the basis of all our obligations, the τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ τὸ ἄριστον, the good and the best (Ia, q. 4, 5, 6). He must also be *infinite,* which means without limitation of essence (Ia, q. 7).

Necessarily above the limitations of space and time, He is immense, everywhere present by His power with which He conserves all creatures in existence (Ia, q. 8). He is absolutely immutable (Ia, q. 9), and consequently eternal (Ia, q. 10).

Lastly, as regards our naturally acquired knowledge, He is *invisible* and *incomprehensible* (Ia, q. 12). However, *He can be known* in a natural way, by analogy derived from creatures (Ia, q. 13).

We will consider Him in His operations, and what these operations are (Ia, q. 14, prologue).

From the definition of self-subsisting Being it follows that He is *immaterial* and consequently the intelligible in act and the *Intellect* in act (Ia, q. 14, a. 1). Since the intellect is defined by reason of its immediate reference to being, it too, like being, is analogous and, like being, can have every imperfection eliminated from it. The same must be said of the will and of love which are defined by reason of their immediate reference to good.[5]

Being itself is not only intelligent but is independent of all material and spatial limitations, especially of any limitation of essence. He is supremely intelligent, and His intelligence cannot be a mere faculty or potentiality, but is an eternal act of intellection. And this thought ever in act cannot but be identified with Being itself supremely intelligible and always actually known.

But, for the sake of a simpler arrangement, we have changed the relative position of the question of truth, which St. Thomas rightly discusses after the question of knowledge.

■ See Vol. I, nn. 18, 29, 39, b and e.

Let us not seek here, as Fichte or Spencer did, for a duality of subject and object. This duality, says St. Thomas (Ia, q. 14, a. 2), comes about only as the result of the potentiality or imperfection of subject and object. When the subject can know but is not knowledge itself, when the object can be known without being the Truth always known, then the two are distinct. But eternal intellection demands that it be absolutely identified with the supremely intelligible Being, and vice versa. Not only the general requirements of divine simplicity make this identification a necessity, but each of these two perfections peculiarly demands it. When all potentiality has been eliminated, pure thought is pure being, and pure being is pure thought: ἔστιν ἡ νόησις νοήσεως νόησις: its thinking is a thinking on thinking (*Met.*, XII, ch. ix).

Divine *wisdom*, in so far as its object is the divine essence and all possible things virtually contained in it, is called knowledge of simple intelligence. In so far as things created, either past, present, or future, constitute its object, it is called knowledge of vision.

If *He who is* is intelligence itself, it must be most evident, continues St. Thomas (Ia, q. 18), for *life* to be attributed to Him in the highest degree. The more immanence there is in life, the greater is its perfection, since vital movement is that which proceeds, not from an external principle, but from a principle within the living being. This same immanence is more or less perfect, varying in degree, according as the life is vegetative, sensitive, or intellectual. It reaches its perfection in supreme Thought, which does not have to seek for its object outside itself, and which is under no necessity of being aroused to action by the illuminating concurrence of a higher Cause. "There is life in God," said Aristotle, "for the act of the intellect is life, and God is intellect supremely in act. It is this eternal act of Thought which gives Thought its perfect life. We also say of God that He is a perfect and eternal living being: ζῶον ἀίδιον ἄριστον. Hence eternal life

belongs to God, for it is God Himself" (*Met.*, Bk. XII, ch. vii).

If *He who is* is intellect and life itself, then *will* must also be attributed to Him. Will indeed follows upon intellect, says St. Thomas (Ia, q. 19, a. 1), just as a natural and unconscious inclination follows upon the form itself or the nature of unconscious beings. Besides, since will and love are defined by reason of their immediate relation to good, which is a property of being, they too, like being, are analogous and can have every imperfection removed from them. The will in God, just as much as the intellect, is not a faculty or potentiality. It is the act itself of the love of the good, and the good itself always actually loved.

The divine will is *free* (Ia, q. 19, a. 3), not as regards the absolute Good which it must love, but as regards finite good by which no further perfection can accrue to it. What constitutes the basis of divine liberty is that the self-subsisting Being is absolutely independent of everything created. It is nothing but the predominating indifference of Being with regard to what is simply possible and is not repugnant to existence, but which has no claim to existence. It is fitting that He who is the sovereign Good should impart what is in Him to others; but He does so with absolute freedom, for there can be no increase in His perfection from the fact that He allows others to share in it.

Still more so God is free to create a certain world in which all things are wisely ordained, rather than some other which would also be a proof of His wisdom. Whatever be the *inequality* between two things of finite goodness, they remain *equally the same for the infinity of the supreme Good* (Ia, q. 25, a. 5, 6).[6]

The One who is *being itself* must also be *omnipotent*, which means that He can give reality to everything which does not imply contradiction, to everything which can *be*. In fact, being is the proper effect of the first Being, who *gives reality to things* just as light illumines, and fire generates heat (Ia, q. 25). As first

[6] Concerning the seeming antinomies with reference to liberty, see ch. iv.

cause and first mover of everything which exists, God must be present to all things, preserving them in their being (Ia, q. 8).

Providence is attributed to the *One who is being itself,* because His external action extending to all created beings even to their smallest parts, is the action of an intelligent agent. But an intelligent agent acts for an end known by it, and this end is the *raison d'être* of all the means that are employed. God, therefore, orders all things to an ultimate end, which is Himself. Providence, or *this type of the order in things to an end,* is also a pure perfection and is defined, like the intellect by which it functions, by reason of its relation to being or to the *raison d'être* of things (Ia, q. 22, a. 1).

The *One who is being itself is just and merciful;* justice and mercy are virtues which reside in His will. He is just because His intelligence and goodness oblige Him to give to each created nature all that is necessary for its attainment of the end assigned to it (Ia, q. 21, a. 2). On the other hand, loving as He must His own good above all things, He is bound to see to it that His inalienable rights are respected and must punish violation of them (Ia IIae, q. 87, a. 1, 3).

The *One who is being itself is merciful,* for it belongs properly to the omnipotent and infinitely good Being to give what is good to others, to come to their assistance, to raise them up from their wretchedness, and, if we may so speak, to bring being out of nothingness, good out of evil, repentance and love out of sin, a love corresponding in intensity to the malice of the sin. Therein is God's triumph and the motive attracting "extreme wealth to extreme poverty." "It belongs to divine mercy," says St. Thomas, "to give generously to others and to help them in their need. And this properly concerns the superior in his dealings with his subjects (*et hoc maxime superioris est:* and this most properly concerns the superior). Hence mercy properly belongs to God" (Ia, q. 21, a. 3; IIa IIae, q. 30, a. 4).

The *One who is being itself is supremely happy.* Beatitude is the perfect felicity of an intellectual nature, which finds its satisfaction in the good which it possesses, knowing itself to be beyond the reach of passing misfortune, and being always master of its actions. Evidently all these conditions for happiness are verified in God, since He is the embodiment of all perfection and intelligence (Ia, q. 26, a. 1).

Lastly, the *One who is being itself is also beauty,* consisting in the closest and most striking harmony between most varied perfections, so varied, indeed, that some of them, though seeming in certain respects to be irreconcilable, such as infinite mercy and infinite justice, are nevertheless identified in the divine love of the supreme Good (Ia, q. 5, a. 4 ad 1um).

The *One who is being itself* is also holiness, or that indissoluble union of all spiritual perfections in their highest degree without any trace of imperfection (IIa IIae, q. 81, a. 8).

The sum-total of these attributes thus derived from *Being itself* enables us to say of God that He is *personal.* In fact, personality is nothing else but subsistence which is independent of matter and which is the basis of intelligence, of consciousness, and of liberty in beings. God, as we have just seen, subsists independently of the world of corporeal beings, like every immaterial being. Besides this, He is intelligent, conscious of Himself, and free. Moreover, since God is absolutely and solely self-subsistent, independently of every other being, since He is omniscient and absolutely free of everything created, He is supremely personal. However, as Vacant remarks, "The Vatican Council did not adopt the formula: *God is a personal being.* This way of speaking of the divine nature contradicts the error of materialists. However, it has the disadvantage of giving the impression that there is only one person in God. But the Catholic Church believes in the Trinity of divine persons." [7] To be

[7] *Etudes sur le Concil du Vatican,* I, 195.

sure, it is only by means of revelation that we can know of this mystery which introduces us into the *intimate life* of God, *such as He is in Himself,* according to what *properly* constitutes Him (Ia, q. 32, a. 1).

It is not the province of theology to demonstrate the possibility of a real distinction between the divine persons, or, what comes to the same thing, that *in itself* this distinction is not impossible or contradictory. To affirm the possibility of this demonstration would be to confuse the natural with the supernatural.[8] Theology merely shows that we *cannot see anything evidently contradictory* in the Trinity of divine persons. After the revelation of this mystery, each of the divine persons is conceived as a subsistent relation or as a relative subsistence. Reason does not have to prove *positively* the analogical validity of this concept of relation, as it had to do in the case of the concepts of natural theology. Since God has made use of this concept as the means of revealing Himself to us, it suffices if theology proves that the relation does not posit in God an *evident* imperfection, but on the contrary that there are certain congruent reasons which permit us to surmise its possibility and its necessity.

We also see that the natural knowledge of God is not anthropomorphic, as the Modernists claimed it to be. We do not conceive God as if He were a man of infinite proportions; but we conceive of Him as *Being itself,* and we admit in Him only those attributes which are derived necessarily from this concept of *self-subsisting Being.* We do not conceive God in the image of man; it is man who is made in the image of God, inasmuch as man has been given an intellect, the object of which is being and

[8] It was for this reason that Rosmini's twenty-fifth proposition was condemned. The proposition reads as follows: "Provided the mystery of the Trinity has been revealed, its existence can be demonstrated by merely speculative arguments, though they are negative and indirect, so that by such arguments this truth is classed among the philosophical subjects and, like the rest of them, becomes a scientific proposition." See Denzinger, n. 1915.

its absolute laws. *"The light of Thy countenance, O Lord, is signed upon us"* (Ps. 4:7). The human intellect is not merely human, it is also an intellect. Inasmuch as it is human (united to the body), its object is the essence of sensible things. Inasmuch as it is an intellect, its object, like that of every intellect, is being itself, and consequently it can rise to the knowledge of God.

Though we do not attain to a knowledge of God *as He is in Himself,* it is truly *God Himself* that is known by our reason. Do we not know our friends, though not knowing them *such as they are in themselves?* Moreover, we cannot stress too much in these days of Agnosticism, that, in one way, we have a more certain knowledge of God than of the intrinsic properties of plants or animals. These essentially material natures cannot be fully intelligible to us. They are within close range of our senses, but they are far removed from the source of all intelligibility, as Aristotle said.[9] And we have a far more certain knowledge of God than we have of men with whom we are living in close intimacy. Reason alone actually assures us that we are more certain of the goodness of God in our regard than of the rectitude of our own intentions. We know the goodness of God better than we do the uprightness of our own heart.

ARTICLE I

ATTRIBUTES RELATIVE TO THE BEING OF GOD

These attributes, as we have said, are those properties of being in general which are found in God in the highest possible degree of perfection. They are unity, truth, and goodness. Then come infinity which excludes all limitation of essence, immensity

[9] Cf. *Met.,* Bk. II, ch. i, in which Aristotle states that divine things are more intelligible in themselves than all other things, although relatively to us they are difficult of apprehension, because they are beyond the reach of sense perception.

and ubiquity which exclude all spatial limitation, eternity which excludes any time limit. Finally, as regards our knowledge, the divine Being is invisible, incomprehensible, and nevertheless able to be known by analogy derived from created things.

46) *Unity and simplicity; truth; perfection and goodness; infinity.*

He who is Being itself is absolutely *one and simple.* Unity is the undividedness of being; every being, considered as such, is one or undivided. If it were divided, it would no longer be one being, but two beings (Ia, q. 11, a. 1). However, it is possible for a being to be divisible or to be composed of parts. We can distinguish in it either quantitative parts, as in the case of a material thing, or the parts constituting its essence (matter and form, body and soul), or the logical parts (genus and the specific difference: animality and rationality). We may also distinguish in it the abstract and the concrete (humanity and this man), substance and accident, or, finally, essence and existence.

Now there can be no kind of composition in the self-subsisting Being. As He possesses all the perfection of being, He must also have all the perfection of unity, since this latter is a property of being (Ia, q. 11, a. 4). Besides, every composite demands a cause.[1] Now Being itself is uncaused. In every composite, what belongs properly to the whole cannot be predicated of the parts, for these are less perfect than the whole. But everything in the self-subsisting Being is identified with this very Being, and there is no imperfection in Him (Ia, q. 3, a. 7). We may consider all the modes of composition, and not one of these can be applied to Him (Ia, q. 3).

There are no quantitative parts in Him, since He is not corporeal. He is not composed of matter and form, for these are merely imperfect and limiting modes of being. He is not composed of genus and *differentia,* since self-existing Being, tran-

[1] See Vol. I, n. 26.

scending the limits of all genera, is what properly constitutes Him. He is not a composite of essence and existence, since He is existence itself. We cannot distinguish in Him between what is abstract or universal (the Deity), and what is concrete or individual (God), since the concrete is opposed to the abstract by reason of its individualized material conditions and actual existence. Now the self-subsisting Being does not admit of individualized material conditions, and He is essentially actual existence. It is impossible to distinguish in Him between substance and accident, since His substance, supremely determined by itself, is incapable of further determinations.

The subsisting Being is therefore absolutely one and simple, and consequently ever unique of its kind. If there could be a multiplication of the Deity, we should be able to distinguish in each of the gods the abstract from the concrete, the divine essence common to all of them from their individualized conditions. There would be two divine existences. The Deity would no more then be existence itself, the self-subsisting Being (Ia, q. 11, a. 3).

He who is Being itself is the *First Truth*. Every being is true in so far as it is in conformity with its eternal type. Thus we say, when we notice that a metal is of the nature of gold, that it is genuine gold and not merely what passes for gold. Or again we say of a plant that it is a real and not an artificial plant, and of a man that he is a real savant. According to this primary acceptation of the term, truth is called ontological. We say also of a judgment that it is true, in so far as it is in conformity with the thing judged. This is called logical or formal truth (Ia, q. 16, a. 1, 2, 3).

The self-subsisting Being is not only in conformity with an eternal type known by the divine intellect, but, by reason of His absolute simplicity, He is the divine intellect itself always in act (Ia, q. 16, a. 4). He is therefore the First Truth, and in Him are identified ontological and logical truth, the real and the ideal.

Contrary to the testimony of conscience and to the principle of contradiction, Hegel identifies the idea of being in general with the reality of being in general, and ends in panlogism. The principle of contradiction or that of identity obliges us in each case to identify in God, but in God alone, the self-subsisting Being and the supreme Intelligible always actually known.

Without ending in panlogism, which means the negation of creative liberty and of human liberty, the fact remains that the First Truth is immutable and eternal, the cause and the supreme measure of all other truth, just as the self-subsisting Being is the principle of all other beings which are analogous reproductions of the perfections contained in this Being.

He who is Being itself is *perfection* and *sovereign Goodness.* Every being is good according to the degree of its being. Even if it possesses only substance, in spite of its deficiencies it has a certain goodness, the goodness of being. In it we find verified the laws of created being as such, thus revealing to us the existence of the primary being, and that itself is a real goodness. But we do not say of a thing that it is good, except when it has that perfection which is appropriate to its nature. Thus we speak of a stone as good for building purposes, of a good fruit, of a good servant, of a good horse. The goodness of a being is that perfection which makes it desirable and lovable, inasmuch as it has in itself the capacity of perfecting things, and of corresponding to some need or desire (Ia, q. 5).

Now the first cause of all beings, the source of all life in the universe, must possess all created perfections in an eminent degree. Moreover, since this cause is the self-subsisting Being, it has of necessity all the perfection which pertains to being, and consequently all absolute perfections which are but modes of being (Ia, q. 4, a. 2; q. 5, a. 2). God is thus essentially sovereign goodness, and there is no accidental or acquired goodness in Him. By His very essence He is His own end and that of every-

thing else. Every creature tends toward its own perfection, which is a participated likeness of supreme perfection. Thus there is a corresponding proportion between the various agents and their respective ends.

From this it follows, says St. Thomas (Ia, q. 60, a. 5), that "every creature is naturally inclined to love God in its own way more than itself. Thus in the human body the hand is, without deliberation, exposed to the blow for the safety of the whole body, of which it is a part. It belongs, indeed, more to the whole than to itself. Otherwise, it would follow that this natural inclination is perverse." In free beings, liberty may be contrary to this natural inclination but cannot destroy it. It must follow this inclination after the manner of a known cause. It is clear that we must love the sovereign Good more than ourselves, since it is infinitely better than ourselves.

Since God is the sovereign Good, it follows that He cannot be the cause of evil as such. Evil is either physical or moral (Ia, q. 48, a. 5, 6). God can in no way will moral evil or sin, which is the result of preferring created good to the sovereign Good. God cannot prefer anything to the sovereign Good, which is Himself. He can only permit sin though disapproving it. Furthermore, only because He has a higher good in view, does He permit that the free will, which by nature is defectible, should fail to function properly, because He is good enough and powerful enough to draw good even out of evil. Thus persecution is permitted by God as the means of the martyr's glory (Ia, q. 19, a. 10).

As to physical evil, such as our sufferings or those of animals, God cannot be said to will these directly, but only accidentally, as being the means of a higher good. Thus the death of a gazelle becomes the means of life for the lion; our sufferings enable us to practise patience; the punishments inflicted by God lead us to repentance and manifest His justice and the inalienable

right of the sovereign Good to be loved above all things (Ia, q. 49, a. 2).

He who is Being itself is *infinite in perfection.* There is a kind of imperfect infinity which can be attributed to matter in that it is not determined. Matter receives its perfection from the form by which it is determined, just as the clay receives its perfection from the form of the statue. On the contrary, there is a formal infinity which consists in that perfection which is independent of all material limitations. Thus the ideal in the mind of the artist may be reproduced indefinitely and, before it becomes a reality limited to a certain locality in space and to a certain portion of matter, it is in a certain sense infinite. Now, of all formal perfections, the most perfect is that of *being,* which is the ultimate actuality of all things. The self-subsistent Being is therefore infinite, not as a corporeal or extended infinity, but as a spiritual infinity of perfection which surpasses not only all spatial and material limitations but even all limitations of essence. In Him existence is not received in an essence capable of receiving existence. He is eternally subsisting and unreceived existence itself.[2] Thus God is supremely determined; perfection in His case is without limitations. He is incomprehensible, "the infinite

[2] See St. Thomas, Ia, q. 7, a. 1: "A thing is called infinite because it is not finite. Matter is in a way made finite by form, and the form by matter. Matter, indeed, made finite by form, inasmuch as matter, before it receives its form, is in potentiality to many forms; but on receiving a form, it is terminated by that one. Again, form is made finite by matter, inasmuch as form, considered in itself, is common to many; but when received in matter, the form is determined to this one particular thing. Now matter is perfected by the form by which it is made finite; therefore, *infinite as attributed to matter has the nature of something imperfect;* for it is as it were formless matter. On the other hand, form is not made perfect by matter, but rather is contracted by matter, and hence the *infinite, regarded on the part of the form not determined by matter, has the nature of something imperfect.*

"Now *being is the most formal of all things,* as appears from what is shown above (Ia, q. 4, a. 1). Since therefore the divine being is not a being received in anything, but He is *His own subsistent being* (Ia, q. 3, a. 4), it is clear that God Himself is infinite and perfect."

ocean of being." Hence it follows that He is infinite in wisdom, in goodness, in power, and in all His perfections.

Thus the infinity which we deduce from the notion of self-subsisting Being may also be proved a posteriori by considering that the production of finite beings as such presupposes an active and infinite power which is possessed only by an infinite and perfect cause. In fact, a finite cause cannot produce any effect whatever, except by the transformation of a pre-existing subject which is capable of this transformation. Thus the sculptor cannot produce a statue unless he has the required material. A teacher gradually molds the intelligence of the pupil, but he did not give him intelligence. Now the more destitute the passive potentiality is, which is a prerequisite of our activity, the richer and more productive must be the active potentiality. The most that we can say is that, when the passive potentiality is nothing more than a mere possibility or non-repugnance to existence, then the active potentiality must be infinite. It follows that, however low in the scale of being a finite being may be, to produce the totality of its being *from nothing* requires an infinite power which is found only in an infinitely perfect being. Therefore the first cause of all things which exist must be an infinitely perfect one.[3]

Pantheism objects to this as follows: but nothing can be added

[3] This proof is given by St. Thomas (Ia, q. 45, a. 5 ad 3um) as follows: "The power of the matter is reckoned not only from the substance of the thing made, but also from the mode of its being made; for a greater heat heats not only more, but quicker. Therefore, although to create a finite effect does not show an infinite power, still to create it from nothing does show an infinite power: which appears from the preceding reply. For if a greater power is required in the agent in proportion to the distance of the potentiality from the act, *it follows that the power of that agent is infinite* (which produces something) *from no presupposed potentiality;* because there is no proportion between *no potentiality* and the potentiality presupposed by the power of a natural agent, and there is no proportion between not-being and being. And because no creature has simply an infinite power, any more than it has an infinite being, as appears above (q. 7, a. 2), it follows that no creature can create."

to the infinite. If, therefore, the world is added as a new reality to the being of God, the being of God is not infinite.

It is easy to answer this objection. We agree that nothing can be added to the infinite in the same order. But the contradiction of Pantheism consists in adding finite modes to the infinite, in such a way that the infinite is at the same time finite. But reason does not reject the idea that in an inferior order something may be added to the infinite, just as the effect is added to the eminent cause producing it. To deny such a possibility would be refusing to infinite Being the perfection of causality, and hence He would be no longer infinite.

But Pantheism maintains that, after the production of created beings, there is *more being* than there was before. Thus we find ourselves maintaining what we imputed as an error to the Evolutionists, namely, that the greater comes from the less.

There is not more being or more perfection as a consequence of creation; rather there are many beings; just as when a teacher has trained a pupil, there is not an increase in the sum of knowledge, but an increase in the number of the learned. Yet this is but a faint analogy. No matter how excellent a teacher may be, he and his school are more perfect than he is alone. But if a cause is infinite, it already contains eminently all the perfections of its effects.

In the order of quantity, it is true to say that infinity plus one is still infinity. If we suppose that the series of days had no beginning, or that it is infinite *a parte ante* (regressively), then the addition of other days is possible *a parte post* (successively). It is only from the finite point of view (*in ratione finiti*) that the series admits of increase, inasmuch as it is finite in one direction. Inasmuch as the series is infinite, it admits of no increase.

If we speak of the infinity of perfection (which means plenitude not of quantity or extent, but of being, of life, of wisdom, of love, of holiness), then with greater reason we must declare

it to be evident that, as a consequence of creation, there is not more perfection, more being, more life, more wisdom, more holiness. But that presupposes that being is analogous and not univocal. Only on this condition do we find that the First Being contains within Himself the plenitude of being.

47) *Immensity, immutability, eternity.*

If we consider the self-subsisting Being as He is related to space, we attribute to Him *immensity* and *ubiquity*. When we say that He is immense, we mean that He is immeasurable, and able to be in every place. In attributing ubiquity to Him, we affirm that He is actually present everywhere. Before creation God was immense, but He was not actually present in all things, since things as yet did not exist. He is everywhere by His power, to which all things are subject; by His presence, since He knows everything, even to the smallest details; by His essence, inasmuch as He maintains all things in existence by means of His preservative act which is His very being. As God creates immediately and not through the medium of a creature or of an instrument, so His preservative act, which is the continuation of His creative act, extends immediately to the very being itself of all created things, to that which is innermost in each of them.[4]

Thus, without being corporeal, simply by virtual contact, the supreme Being who is a pure spirit, is in every place and in all parts of space in which there are bodies. Moreover, He is present to all spirits, that type of being which is not subject to spatial limitations, preserving them in their being as He preserves all created things. This immensity and ubiquity have nothing material and quantitative about them, as Spinoza incorrectly thought to be so. There is not a grosser conception than to imagine God, who is Being itself, to have a body without limitations, as though

[4] See Ia, q. 8, a. 1. Concerning this preservative act, see nn. 34, 37, 52.

He were like a circle with its circumference everywhere and its center nowhere. Since He is pure spirit, He is above all considerations of space; and by His creative and preservative power He maintains all material bodies, somewhat as the sun is present to the rays emanating from it, as a principle is present to its immediate consequences, as a soul is present to the thoughts coming from it. Thus God is present to all beings, to all souls of which He is eminently the center. To be conscious of this presence is to approach Him and all creatures in Him. "For in him we live and move and are" (Acts 18:28).

He who is Being itself is absolutely *immutable*. He can acquire nothing, not being in potentiality for further determination, since He is supremely determined and pure act. Neither can He lose anything, since He is absolutely simple. This absolute stability of the divine being applies necessarily to His wisdom and will. All mutability, all progress in knowledge or in love presupposes imperfection. This immutability is not that of inertia or of death. On the contrary, it is the immutability of supreme life which possesses everything which it can and must have, there being no need of acquiring it and no possibility of losing it (Ia, q. 9).

Eternity consists in the uniformity of an unchangeable life which has neither beginning nor end, and which is possessed all at once. "Eternity is a simultaneously full and perfect possession of interminable life." [5] It is said of Mozart that he always heard a melody, not successively, like other listeners, but "simultaneously," in the law itself of its composition. Plato (*Timaeus*, 37, d) calls time "the mobile image of motionless eternity." Even if time were without either beginning or end, it would none the less continue to pass. It never stops, it is fleeting. We necessarily distinguish in time between the past, the present, and the future.

[5] Boethius, *De consolatione*, III, 2. For an explanation of this, see St. Thomas, Ia, q. 10, a. 1.

It is the measure of motion, which presupposes a "before" and an "after." We, too, reckon days according to the apparent motion of the sun.

Our life is a diversified one; in it hours succeed one another varied by work, prayer, fatigue, and sleep. Certain holy souls, who have reached the stage of almost continual union with God, rise above this variety and this flight of time. For these the time of work is still the time of prayer. We may say that theirs is a *complete life of faith.* Instead of leading a divided and scattered life, they have unified it. If, then, there is a life that never had a beginning and will never have an end, and that is also absolutely immutable and hence *completely present* to itself in *one permanent instant,* in one absolute "now," this life concentrates within itself in an eminent way all the various moments which succeed one another in time (Ia, q. 10). Such is eternity. It is the uniformity of an unchangeable and unlimited life, which is present to itself all at once. This contemplation of God causes us to pause at times in our reflections, and gives us some idea of the nature of this uniformity and plenitude of the divine life. "Join thy heart to the eternity of God, and with Him thou shalt be eternal," says St. Augustine. "Join thyself to the eternity of God; with Him wait for those things which are beneath thee." [6] On the contrary, whoever simply goes back in thought thousands of millions of years, multiplying this number again by itself, even inferring with Aristotle that there was no beginning to this series of days, such a one does not get beyond the range of passing time and does not at all arrive at the idea of motionless eternity. A man held captive by the senses may look upon this latter as death. But for one whose life is spent here on earth in the contemplation of God, it is time that seems to be an unceasing death, or a life such that the sole purpose of its realization is for it to end in death.

[6] Commentary on Ps. 92: 8, 10.

It is infinity which separates the "absolute now" from the "fleeting now," the *"standing now"* from the *"passing now"* which is all that time really is (Ia, q. 10, a. 4). Time is the consummation of instability.

What are the points of resemblance between creative evolution and divine eternity? Some have endeavored to substitute the former for the latter. Creative evolution is the essence of inconstancy, seeking itself and fleeing from itself. How can it be said to create itself? To do so it would have to be already in existence, in fact it would have to be Being itself and not a becoming which is continually vanishing.

By way of objection we are told that creative action, such as we conceive it to be, since it must be eternal, can have only an eternal effect, and can produce nothing new. Once the cause is posited in act, the effect must follow immediately. If, then, the divine action is eternal, the effect must be eternal, too.

This difficulty arises from confusing necessary causes, whose operations take place in time, with a free cause of a higher order than time. Necessary and temporal causes, when in act, immediately produce their effects. A free cause, of a higher order than time, produces time itself as it produces movement, which is measured by time. This cause is free both as to the time and manner of the production, not having to come into action, since there can be no question of any succession in this cause.[7]

Eternity is still a mystery for us, though in itself it is more intelligible than time is. On first consideration, time seems to be something obvious, because we find it to be a fact attested by experience; but in itself, it may be very obscure, scarcely intelligible, on the border line of intelligibility, because it belongs to the outer confines of being. A thing is intelligible according to the degree of its actuality. "Everything is intelligible according as it is actual," is St. Thomas' frequently repeated quotation

[7] See *Contra Gentes*, Bk. II, ch. xxxv.

from Aristotle. Eternity, which is the uniformity of the wisdom and life of the absolute Being, is obscure for us only because it is too bright a light for the feebleness of the mind's eye.

48) *Invisibility, incomprehensibility, knowableness.*

Compared with our naturally acquired knowledge, whether of the sensitive or the intellectual order, the divine Being remains *invisible,* precisely because He is too luminous in Himself. "Everything is knowable according as it is actual," says St. Thomas (Ia, q. 12, a. 1); "consequently God, who is pure act without any admixture of potentiality or imperfection, is in Himself supremely knowable. But what is supremely knowable in itself, may not be knowable to a particular intellect, on account of the excess of the intelligible object above the intellect. Thus the sun, which is supremely visible, cannot be seen by the bat by reason of its excess of light." This comparison was a familiar one with Plato and Aristotle (*Met.,* Bk. I, ch. ii).

Evidently God, who is a pure spirit, cannot be seen by bodily eyes which perceive only sensible things. Neither can He be seen by the merely natural powers of any created intellect. The *proper object* of this intellect, which is created being, must be proportionate to it. Moreover, the proper object of the human intellect, naturally united with a body, is the intelligibility of things sensible.[8] Hence it is only through the mirror of sensible

[8] This doctrine of St. Thomas regarding the *proper objects* of human, angelic, and divine intellects, and regarding their *common and adequate object,* may be tabulated as follows:

Intellect	divine . . . proper object . . . divine essence	}	Being (adequate object)
	angelic . . . proper object . . . angelic essence		
	human . . . proper object . . . essence of things sensible		

Intellect in general, like being in general, is analogous. The various analogates of the intellect correspond to the various analogates of intelligible being.

Thus we see that the divine essence, such as it is in itself, exceeds the proper object of our intellect and cannot be known in a natural way. But it does not

things that we can acquire a natural knowledge of God, just as we know causes through the perfections reflected in the effects. A created intellect, however elevated in the scale of being, even if it were the highest that we can think of in the angelic order, cannot acquire a natural knowledge of God except through the medium of spiritual beings (Ia, q. 12, a. 4, 12; q. 56, a. 3).

God Himself cannot give us any *created idea* which is representative in itself of His divine essence such as it actually is. This created idea could not be intelligible except by participation and so it would be incapable of representing the unparticipated Intelligibility, the ever actual and eternally subsistent Intellection, "the *self-subsisting intellect*" (Ia, q. 12, a. 2).

Yet there is no repugnance in the idea that God, by an absolutely gratuitous gift, by a *purely supernatural light,* should so fortify our intellect that it could see Him as He sees Himself. Although, to be sure, the divine essence surpasses the *proper object* of our intellect, it does not surpass the *adequate object,* which is *"being"* in all its amplitude. The divine essence, such as it is in itself, still belongs to the category of being. Although the formal concept of the Deity transcends the formal concept of being (*super ens,* above being), nevertheless this latter is *formally* contained in the eminence of the Deity. To see supreme Being as it actually is, without any admixture of potentiality or of imperfection, one must see the Deity (Ia, q. 12, a. 4 ad 3um).[9]

The natural desire that we have of seeing God's essence is also a sign that it is possible for us to be elevated above our natural state so as to see God in the supernatural order. (See Ia, q. 12, a. 1; Ia IIae, q. 3, a. 8; *Contra Gentes,* Bk. III, ch. l.)

Plato, toward the end of his dialectic on love, went so far as to say: "If there is anything which appraises this life at its true

exceed our adequate object. Therefore we see no repugnance in the idea that we have been raised to see God in a supernatural way.

[9] On this subject consult the commentators of St. Thomas, especially Cajetan, Bannez, John of St. Thomas, Gonet, and Billuart.

value, it is the contemplation of absolute beauty. But what if man had eyes to see the true beauty, the divine beauty, I mean, pure and clear and unalloyed, not clogged with the pollutions of mortality and all the colors and vanities of human life? Would that be an ignoble destiny for us to have our eyes fixed upon it, finding our delight in contemplating such an object and holding converse with it?" [10]

It is this natural desire which we experience within us when we inquire into the close harmony prevailing between the divine perfections. Agnosticism confronts us with the objection that these perfections are irreconcilable. We do, indeed, solve the problems presented by the antinomies, and we avoid the conclusion that there is any contradiction between the various attributes, but the *intimate mode* of reconciliation between the attributes escapes us; it is only in a negative and relative way that we accomplish the reconciliation. Thus we speak of the eminence of the Deity. If it were possible to see the Deity as it is in itself, then there would be an end of all obscurity. Such a desire is natural in us. But this natural desire depends upon the condition that God give us the means of seeing Him as He sees Himself; for it is evident that our natural faculties are insufficient for this. Since this desire is conditional, it is inefficacious; [11] we cannot say that it is an exigency, which is the mistake made by Baius and the Jansenists. It may truly be said to be a *velleity* which could be frustrated, though it could not be considered a loss for us. So it would have been if we had been created in the purely natural order.

But, it may be said, how can a natural velleity have a supernatural object? Its object, however, is not *formally* supernat-

[10] Plato, *Symposium*, 211, e (Jowett's translation).

[11] On this subject see the commentators of St. Thomas (Ia, q. 12, a. 1), especially John of St. Thomas, the Salmanticenses, Gonet, Billuart, and Ferrariensis on *Contra Gentes* (Bk. III, ch. li). Cf. Garrigou-Lagrange, *De revelatione*, I, 376–403.

ural,[12] since only in a natural way is it known to be desirable. In other words, what we naturally desire to see is the divine essence inasmuch as it is the principle of the naturally knowable divine attributes, so that in this way we have intrinsic evidence of the complete harmony prevailing between these attributes. Our natural desire does not extend to the divine essence as the principle of the relations in the Trinity, or as constituting the foundation of the supernatural order of grace and glory. Presenting the case in simpler form, man can naturally desire to see the essence of God as the author of the natural order, and not the essence of God inasmuch as He is the author of the supernatural order, since the realities of this order are known to us only through revelation. But the divine essence is one and absolutely simple, and cannot be seen as the principle of the divine attributes, without at the same time being seen as the principle of the relations in the Trinity. Thus this velleity shows us[13] that it is possible for us to be raised to see God in a supernatural way.

Even for the elect who have been raised to the beatific vision, the divine essence remains *incomprehensible.* Their vision of it is immediate, without the intermediary of anything created or of any idea; yet their vision could not be a comprehensive one, such as God alone naturally has of Himself.

"To comprehend a thing, in the true sense of the word, is to know it so far as it can be known. One may know a geometrical proposition without comprehending it. Such is the case with those who admit it only because men say so, or because there are probable reasons for its being so. They know, indeed, the whole

[12] It is so only *materially,* taking the word in its metaphysical sense. This means that it is a supernatural reality known from a natural point of view.

[13] The Thomists in general admit that this proof has merely the force of a congruent or probable argument, like the reasons advanced in defense of the possibility of other supernatural mysteries. Cf. Billuart, *De Deo,* diss. 4, a. 3, appendix, and Salmanticenses, Ia, q. 12.

proposition and each of its parts, the subject, the predicate, and the composition; but they do not grasp the truth by a scientific demonstration. They do not know it as it is capable of being known."[14] Thus a disciple who knows his master's teaching in all its parts, does not comprehend it as the master does. He does not penetrate so deeply into it, and perceives only in a confused manner how closely related each part is with the supreme principles. Thus the short-sighted person sees a whole landscape, though he does not see it as clearly as a person who has good eyesight.

The divine essence, which is the infinite Being, is infinitely knowable; and created intellects, raised to the supernatural order so as to be able to enjoy the beatific vision, cannot know the infinite except in a finite way, more or less perfect, according to the intensity of supernatural light which they receive. They truly see directly the whole divine essence, but not *in its totality,* not in that infinitely perfect way which belongs to God alone. They do not exhaust its infinite cognoscibility, and they do not perceive the innumerable multitude of possible beings that it virtually contains.

Invisible and incomprehensible as the nature of God is for us, yet it is naturally *knowable* in this life by the use of reason. This knowledge, which we have already considered at length (nn. 29, 33, 42), can be only analogical. We find the absolute perfections of God reflected in the mirror of created things. Thus we positively know Him in that He has something analogically in common with His effects, inasmuch as He is being, good, wise, or powerful. But we cannot express what it is that properly constitutes Him as He is, except in a negative and relative way by means of objects derived from sense experience. Thus we say of Him that He is the infinite Being, or the supreme Being (Ia, q. 13).

[14] See Ia, q. 12, a. 7, c, and ad 2um.

Unity, truth, goodness or perfection, infinity, immensity, immutability, eternity, invisibility, and incomprehensibility—these are the principal attributes relative to God's being itself.

Since action or operation follows being, and the mode of operation follows the mode of being, we now come to discuss the attributes relative to the divine operations. The activity of a material body is corporeal, that of a spirit is spiritual. What must be our concept of the divine action, and what are its relations with the divine Being and with the world?

ARTICLE II

ATTRIBUTES RELATIVE TO THE DIVINE OPERATIONS

According to the definition of self-subsisting Being, it is immaterial or spiritual and hence intelligent. The two great attributes of the divine Intellect are *wisdom* and *providence. Free will* is an absolute perfection which is the necessary consequence of intelligence. The act of the divine will is love, and its two great virtues are *justice* and *mercy.* If we pass from the immanent operations to discuss the immediate principle of God's external operations, then this principle merits the name of *omnipotence.* All these operations constitute the *divine life,* the intimate nature of which is known to us only by revelation. It is in this order that we shall consider this second category of attributes so that we may show how they are deduced from Being itself.

49) *Wisdom, foreknowledge, providence.*

Under the general term "wisdom," the word most frequently used in Scripture, we shall discuss the following: divine knowledge, determining its primary and secondary object; God's foreknowledge of future contingent events; His providence.

Divine knowledge. All men flatter themselves that they know

what wisdom is, even the sceptics who make it consist in doubting everything. Wisdom is a general view of all things. But it is possible for us to view all things from on high, to believe that all things proceed from a holy love, or are permitted by it and concur toward a supreme Good. On the contrary, it is possible for us to view all things from below, to believe that they are all the result of material and blind fate, with no end in view. There is an optimistic wisdom which shuts its eyes to the existence of evil, and there is a pessimistic and discouraging wisdom which sees no good in anything.

The characteristic of the wisdom which Scripture calls "the wisdom of the world" is to see all things from below. It judges all things in human life either from the worldly pleasures they afford or from the material interests they safeguard or from the satisfaction that our ambition or pride finds in them. Worldly-minded people are thus led to make the wisdom of this life consist in striking an average medium between true good and evil of too gross or perverse a nature. The wise man, so they say, must not go to excess in anything. Thus it often happens that such people call "good" what is indifferently so, and what is but a confusion of the ideas of good and evil. Under the name of tolerance, this "carnal wisdom" is as indulgent to vice as it is indifferent to virtue. It is particularly severe in its judgment of whatever surpasses it in ideal and seems a reproach to it; at times, it even expresses its hatred for eminent virtue, known as sanctity.

Such is the wisdom of the world; St. Paul says "it is foolishness with God" (I Cor. 3:19). It judges all things, even those the most sublime or the most necessary, such as salvation, by the vainest of things. St. Paul, having the divine wisdom in mind, adds: "If any man among you seem to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise" (I Cor. 3:18).

What then is divine wisdom? It is a luminous and uncreated

knowledge, which penetrates the whole being of God and which from its high abode, by its very purity, without suffering the least defilement, extends to everything which is and can be, however insignificant or bad the thing may be.

The ever self-subsisting Being, because absolutely immaterial or spiritual, is supremely intelligent. Immateriality is the principle of knowledge, and the greater the degree of immateriality, the higher is the form of knowledge. Plants have not knowledge; they are enclosed within themselves, since they are wholly material. Our senses have knowledge of the sensible qualities of external objects; they are susceptible of everything which pertains to the sensible order, because they are already to some extent immaterial. Our intellect knows things in a more perfect manner, and rises above the particular limitations of space and time: being, truth, goodness, and justice are its province. What enables the intellect to know these immaterial objects, unless it be its absolute immateriality?

Dominating all things is the ever self-subsisting Being, absolutely immaterial, and independent of all limitations arising from matter, space, and time, independent, too, of all limitation caused by essence. In Him, there is nothing carnal, nothing corporeal. He is purely immaterial, therefore He must be supremely intelligent (Ia, q. 14, a. 1).

In attributing intelligence to God, do we imply an imperfection which is unworthy of Him? Undoubtedly in us, intelligence is a faculty, the principle of a multiplicity of transient acts; but it is really distinct from its acts and from its object. In us, wisdom is a habitual disposition of this faculty, one that is acquired by experience and reflection. In the divine essence there is nothing potential, nothing acquired, nothing multiple. All these imperfections are but created modes of intelligence and of wisdom, which in their formal concepts do not include these imperfections. If our intellect is only a faculty relative to being, that is

because we are not the subsistent Being. In God His intellect is His very Being, which is always actually known to Him. It is not a faculty which is the principle of various acts, but is the eternal intellection of infinite truth.

This intellectual act, which does not proceed from a faculty, is not distinguished even virtually[1] from the divine essence which is the thinking subject, nor from the divine essence which is the object known. Since it is pure actuality in the order of being, the divine essence is not in potentiality with regard to the act of knowing; it is this very act.[2] On the other hand, since the divine essence is pure actuality in the intelligible order, by reason of its absolute immateriality it is not merely potentially intelligible, as if it had need of some idea which would express it, but it is of itself actually known.[3] Hence the divine intellection is identified with the divine essence which is the subject and primary object of the operation. "The absence of potentiality in each accounts for the absence of a duality consisting of a subject and object."[4] This is the reply that can be made to Plotinus,

[1] Thomists often speak in this way. They mean that there can be no question in this case of an *intrinsically virtual distinction* which has its foundation in the divine reality itself, since the divine essence is not in potentiality for anything whatever; but we can speak of an *extrinsically virtual distinction*, which has its foundation in created things, in that these serve us as the means by which we come to know God.

[2] "It must be said that the *act* of God's *intellect* is His *substance*. For if His act of understanding were other than His substance, then something else, as the Philosopher says (*Metaphysics*, XII), would be the act and perfection of the divine substance, to which the divine substance would be related as potentiality is to act, which is altogether impossible, because the act of understanding is the perfection and act of the one understanding." Ia, q. 14, a. 4.

[3] See Ia, q. 14, a. 2: "Since therefore God has nothing in Him in potentiality, but is pure act, His *intellect* and its *object* are altogether the same; so that He neither is without the intelligible species, as is the case with our intellect when it understands potentially; nor does the intelligible species differ from the substance of the divine intellect when it understands actually; but the intelligible species itself is the divine intellect itself, and thus God understands Himself through Himself."

[4] See Ia, q. 14, a. 2: "For the reason why we actually feel or know a thing is because our intellect or sense is actually informed by the sensible or intelligible

Fichte, and Spencer, who declare that the intellect implies a duality which is irreconcilable with the simplicity of the Absolute.

There is therefore absolute identity, without an intrinsically virtual distinction, between the divine essence (thinking subject) and the intellect, the idea, the intellection, and the divine essence as known. To admit in this case a virtual distinction, an intrinsic one which has its foundation in God, would be to say that one of these divine perfections can be conceived as being potential, having its foundation in the divine reality itself (*cum fundamento in re*).[5]

species. And *because of this only, it follows that sense or intellect is distinct from the sensible or intelligible object, since both are in potentiality.*"

[5] According to the common teaching of the Thomists, the only virtual distinction in God is that between those perfections which, as found in created things, according to their objective concepts, are distinct from each other and belong to different orders: such perfections are intellect and will. But there is no virtual distinction in God between those perfections which as found in created things, are distinguished only because of the potentiality implied. Such are essence and existence, or intellect and intellection. *Since there is no potentiality in God, there is no foundation in Him for such a distinction.* We can speak of an extrinsically virtual distinction, and that only, in so far as the pure actuality of God is equivalent, in an eminent way, to potentiality and act which are distinct in created things.

"*In God there is a virtual distinction, one for which there* is a real foundation, *only between those perfections which, as found in created things, are distinguished formally or virtually, not simply because of the implied potentiality, as in intellect and intellection, but because of what is formally denoted by the objective concepts,* which therefore belong to different orders, as is the case with the intellect and will." Billuart, *De Deo,* diss. 2, a. 1, sec. 1; diss. 5, a. 1, dico. 2; John of St. Thomas (on Ia, q. 14), disp. 16, a. 2, nn. 19, 20, 28, 33; Gonet, *Clypeus thomisticus,* disp. 2, a. 3, sec. 1; Salmanticenses, *De Deo uno,* tr. IV, disp. 2, dub. 2, nn. 21, 34; Contenson (*De Deo,* I, diss. 2, ch. ii, spec. 2) admits that there is no virtual distinction between the divine intellect and divine intellection, but, in opposition to various Thomists, he thinks that a distinction must be made between the divine intellection and the divine essence as known. Billuart (*De Deo,* diss. 2, a. 1, sec. 4, obj. 3) sums up the more common teaching of the Thomists when he says: "In every intellectual act the object of this act seeks to unite itself with the intellect, and the more perfect is the intellectual act, the more perfect is the union. Hence the divine intellection, since it is infinite and in the highest degree of actuality, reaches such a degree of eminent perfection and of simplicity as to be identified with

"Thus we see," says St. Thomas, "that in God the intellect as knowing, the divine essence as immediately known, and His act of understanding are absolutely one and the same thing. Even when we say that God 'has knowledge,' we do not place any multiplicity in His being, and we do not destroy His supreme simplicity." [6]

From this we see that the knowledge which God has of Himself infinitely surpasses that which we have of ourselves. There is nothing obscure, nothing mysterious, for the divine intellect. Because of the numerous impulses more or less conscious which influence our judgments and our wishes, because of the graces offered and perhaps often refused, we remain a mystery, indeed, to ourselves. The most intelligent persons do not fully know themselves. "But neither do I judge my own self," says St. Paul; "for I am not conscious to myself of anything. Yet I am not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord" (I Cor. 4:4).

It is the Lord who fully knows Himself as far as He is knowable. Not only does He exhaust by His comprehensive knowledge the infinite abyss of truth which He is, but His luminous thought so penetrates His Being, that it is identified with Him, without any distinction between them. God is a purely intellectual and eternally subsistent scintillation. He is the highest and the uncreated spiritual light. Compared with it the sun is but a shadow, a dark stain. "For she is more beautiful than the sun, and above all the order of the stars; being compared with the

its object, *without any virtual distinction for which there is a real foundation.* This is what the holy Doctor expresses when he says (Ia, q. 14, a. 2): 'Since therefore God has nothing in Him of potentiality, but is pure act, His intellect and its object are *altogether the same.*' Therefore, there is not even a virtual distinction between them."

[6] "Thus it follows from all the foregoing that in God, intellect and the object understood, and the intelligible species, and His act of understanding, are entirely one and the same. Hence when God is said to be understanding, no kind of multiplicity is attached to His substance" (Ia, q. 14, a. 4).

light she is found before it. For after this cometh night; but no evil can overcome wisdom. For she is the brightness of eternal light" (Wisdom 7:26, 29, 30).

In so far as the divine essence explicitly contains in an eminent way all its attributes and the relations of the Trinity, it is the formal and primary object of divine knowledge.[7] This eminent knowledge of the divine Being embraces everything actual and possible. This constitutes the secondary object of His knowledge. With regard to this secondary object, a twofold distinction is made in the knowledge of God, one being called the knowledge of simple intelligence, and the other of vision.[8]

God's knowledge of possible things is called His knowledge of *simple intelligence,* because it does not presuppose any act of the will or the actual existence of the object of this knowledge. God sees the infinite multitude of possible things in His essence as so many ways by which it is analogically imitable. Thus the artist who has conceived something ideal, imagines the various possible ways in which it can be realized.

God's knowledge of what exists, what has existed, or what is yet to come into existence, is called His *knowledge of vision,* because, like vision, it is concerned with things, not merely pos-

[7] See Billuart (*De Deo,* diss. 5, a. 2, sec. 2), who rightly reconciles the apparently opposite opinions of certain Thomists. It would be an error to maintain with Durandus that the formal object of divine knowledge is universal being which is commonly predicated by way of analogy both of the uncreated Being and of the created modes of being. It was more or less a view that Rosmini held. (See Denzinger, nn. 1897, 1904, 1905.) No knowledge can be attributed to God which precedes the knowledge that He has of Himself, for nothing is prior or superior to Him.

It is not with a real universality of contents or of causality, but with a universality of the logical order, based entirely upon our imperfect mode of knowing things, that being in general is more universal than the uncreated Being. God does not know being in general, in the abstract way that we know it. He knows it in the concrete form, in so far as it is realized primarily in Himself and in created things by participation.

[8] See Ia, q. 14, a. 2, 9; *De veritate,* q. 3, a. 3 ad 8um. *Contra Gentes,* Bk. I, chs. lx, lxix.

sible, but really existing. This knowledge of vision is further distinguished in God, according as He approves of what is good and disapproves of all that is evil, merely permitting it. The reason for these distinctions is to be sought for in the objects of the divine knowledge and in our imperfect mode of knowing things. They in no way affect the unity of this knowledge which by a *single act,* absolutely simple, comprehends both the divine essence and all possible and created things.[9]

It is in Himself that God sees possible things, by reason of the infinitely variable imitability of the divine essence. To deny God this knowledge would be to deny that God comprehends Himself and His possibilities. It would be also a limited view and unworthy of God to say that He has merely a general, confused, or progressive knowledge of things. It embraces at once, without any reasoning, all the possible details of each individual thing; for these very details also remotely participate in the divine perfections, and are virtually contained in His omnipotence, which can bring them into being. Neither would God have a comprehensive knowledge of the nature of being, if He did not know all the possible modes of being, even each individual being (Ia, q. 14, a, 3, 5, 6, 7). But if it is in contemplating Himself that God knows all possible things, *whence and how* does He know all past, present and future things?

St. Thomas (Ia, q. 14, a. 8) answers this question by pointing out that the *knowledge of God,* far from being, like our knowledge, determined and measured by things, is the *cause of things.* It is evident that God cannot be informed, as we are, by the facts which we are obliged to wait for and to verify. The divine intellect cannot derive any knowledge from things, but, on the contrary, by its creative knowledge it gives existence to things. It is not, therefore, because things are or will be, that God knows them, but it is because He knows them and wishes them to be, that

[9] See John of St. Thomas, on Ia, q. 14, disp. 16, a. 2, n. 41.

they are and that they will be. Analogous to the practical knowledge of the artist by which he produces a work of art, the divine knowledge is the cause of things, in so far as the divine will is joined to it. "The knowledge of God is the cause of things, in so far as His will is joined to it" (Ia, q. 14, a. 8). This union of God's knowledge with His will constitutes the *divine decree.*[10]

Again, therefore, it is in contemplating Himself that God knows all things, past, present, or future. He sees them in all their details with the greatest accuracy; but especially He sees them, and can see them only *from on high,* in His all divine light, in their eminent cause. He knows them in their origin, which is by all means a more perfect way than knowing them immediately in themselves, in the obscurity of created light. In the *City of God* (Bk. XI, ch. vii) St. Augustine expresses this truth when he says: "In comparison with the Creator's knowledge our knowledge is, so to speak, an evening knowledge. . . . The knowledge which the creature has, *of itself* is faded and obscure; known in God, as works of a skilled artificer, created things are incomparably more luminous." St. Augustine delights in calling this knowledge which God has, morning knowledge, calling ours evening knowledge. He concedes both kinds to the angels; but only the more perfect belongs to God; the other is too obscure and in God would be an imperfection. This knowledge is inferior to divine contemplation.[11]

Dionysius (*De div. nom.,* ch. vii) speaks in the same way. He

[10] This point is of the greatest importance for determining the precise meaning of the thirteenth article of this same question which concerns the foreknowledge of future contingent things.

[11] In like manner St. Augustine (*Quaestiones,* Bk. LXXXIII, q. 46) says: "Nor does God have intuitive knowledge of anything outside of Himself." It is in this sense, we think, that Aristotle's passage in the *Metaphysics* (Bk. XII, ch. ix) must be understood. Several historians have put a wrong construction upon it, making out Aristotle's meaning to be that God has no knowledge of things in this world. See the commentary of St. Thomas on this passage, Bk. XII, lect. 2.

says: "Not each and every thing is submitted to God's knowledge of vision, but He knows all things in that He knows them in their cause." Concerning angelic knowledge [12] and God's knowledge, St. Thomas says the same: "So we say that God sees Himself in Himself, because He sees Himself through His essence; and He sees other things *not in themselves, but in Himself,* inasmuch as His essence contains the similitude of things other than Himself" (Ia, q. 14, a. 5).[13] In addition to this the Angelic Doctor says: "The authority of Holy Scripture seems also to uphold this opinion; for in Psalm 101, verse 20, it is said of God: 'He hath looked forth from His high sanctuary,' seeing all else, as it were, from His own lofty self." [14]

Various theologians, such as Vasquez, Suarez, and many Molinists depart from this sublime doctrine of St. Thomas.[15] Vasquez believes it to be more perfect for God to know things immediately in themselves. This error is the very opposite to that of Malebranche, who says that in this life we see all things in God. Suarez and several Molinists, in order to safeguard their special theory about the foreknowledge of future free things, maintain that God knows created things in two ways: either in Himself, as in their cause, or in themselves immediately. The unanimous teaching of the Thomists is that it would be an imperfection for God to know created things in any other way than in Himself. In such a case His intellect would be immediately specified by a created object, and there would be in it a finite image of finite things, an image which would have to be de-

[12] Cf. Ia, q. 58, a. 6, 7; *De veritate,* q. 8, a. 16.

[13] Cf. *De veritate,* q. 2, a. 3 ad 6um and 9um.

[14] *Contra Gentes,* Bk. I, ch. xlix.

[15] Cf. the Wiceburgenses, S.J., *De Deo,* disp. 3, a. 3, nn. 117–137. Also Suarez, *De attributis Dei positivis,* Bk. III, ch. ii, n. 16 and *De scientia Dei futurorum contingentium absolutorum,* Bk. II, ch. vii, n. 15. (These texts will be found *infra,* appendix IV, ch. i, a. 2.) These doctrines are refuted by the Thomists in their commentaries on the *Summa,* Ia, q. 14. See John of St. Thomas, the Salmanticenses, Gonet, Gotti, or Billuart (*De Deo,* diss. 5, a. 4).

rived from created things, like the image which determines our intellect to act (Ia, q. 14, a. 5 ad 3um). The infinite intellect would thus *depend* upon the finite.

In fact, God sees things of this world, not in the paleness of their created light, but in the brilliance of His light. On the other hand, we see spiritual things only in an inferior manner as reflected in material things. We know divine things only through the mirror of created things. It is what St. Augustine calls evening knowledge.

God sees Himself in an eternal morning light. He sees from on high all possible creatures in the clarity of His essence. Material things He sees in His absolute spirituality. Let us take the case of an artistic genius who has planned a masterpiece of art. He contemplates it in its ideal state, he hestitates to put it into effect, to materialize it in bronze or marble, because he knows that in its ideal state it will be always more beautiful than when it is materialized. How much more beautiful the Roman Campagna appeared to Raphael than as seen by us. Thus things of this world, whatever good there is in our lives, are incomparably more beautiful as seen by God in His divine light, than as they are in their contracted reality. It is not that God overlooks their defects, but it is only because of their very close and fundamental relations with the infinite Cause which they reveal, and with the ultimate end to which they all tend, that He can come in contact with these meager and finite realities. He sees them only as reflections of His perfections, in the divine idea by which they are directed to their ends.

Such is divine wisdom. It can see and judge all things only from on high, in their highest cause and in their ultimate end. It is influenced neither by the dazzling effects of fortune nor of talent. With divine wisdom it is charity that counts, that *"pearl of great price."* Benedict Labre, who was clothed in rags but had the heart of a saint, was of far greater value before God than a

Caesar or a Napoleon in all the splendor of their worldly glory. Viewed in the light of earthly things, the Passion of Christ appears somber to us. Viewed from on high in the divine light, how radiant it must be! The divine wisdom sees everything as the reflection of the glory of "He who is."

If God knows all things in Himself, then how does He know evil, which is absolutely foreign to Him and which He cannot cause? St. Thomas says: "God knows evil through the good of which it is a privation, as darkness is known by light. He would not know good things perfectly unless He also knew evil things." How can anyone know what justice is, if he does not know what injustice is? The presence of sin in someone's soul is known to God inasmuch as He permits this moral defect in which He cannot concur, and inasmuch as He concurs as first cause in the physical entity of the sin.[16] He cannot turn a created will away from Himself; [17] but He is not bound to prevent the will, which is subject to defect, from falling into sin. Therefore, although He permits this failure, He is not responsible for it.[18] As for the physical entity of sin, God can be the primary cause of this, just as a great painter, in using a poor brush, is the cause of its movement, but not of what is defective about it.[19]

Therefore evil is known by God in His decree permitting though condemning it. He also envisages it in His sublime

[16] Cf. Ia, q. 14, a. 10; q. 19, a. 9; q. 23, a. 3: "The will to permit someone to fall into sin." Ia IIae, q. 79, a. 1, 2. Consult the Thomist commentators, *e. g.*, Billuart, *De Deo,* diss. 6, a. 4, obj. 3; diss. 8, a. 5; *De peccatis,* diss. 5, a. 9. See also John of St. Thomas on these same articles. Cf. Guillermin, O.P., art. "S. Thomas et le prédéterminisme" in the *Revue thomiste,* 1895, p. 568.

[17] Cf. Ia IIae, q. 79, a. 1: "God cannot be the cause directly of sin."

[18] *Ibid.*: "God cannot be indirectly the cause of sin."

[19] Cf. Ia IIae, q. 79, a. 2: "Sin denotes a *being* and an action *with a defect.* This defect is from a created cause, the free will, as falling away from the order of the First Agent, God. Hence this defect is not attributed to God as its cause, but to the free will: even as the defect of limping is attributed to a crooked leg as its cause, but not to the motive power which nevertheless causes whatever there is of movement in the limping."

motives for permitting it. He knows it in all its baseness and in all its bearings. Above all He perceives the final outcome of this defect, how evil, even in its most stubborn form, necessarily concurs with appealing force in proclaiming the absolute rights of the Good. The divine wisdom, without becoming obscured, knows, in the uncreated light, the blackest of crimes. Because of the very purity of this light, it sees through them. Thus the rays of the sun are not sullied by being reflected in muddy water.

God's foreknowledge of future contingent things. What we have just said of God's knowledge of things, may be applied to His foreknowledge of future contingent things and especially of free future actions. It is a defined dogma of the Catholic Church that God knows them from all eternity.[20] St. Thomas (Ia, q. 14, a. 13) views this problem as a particular case of the general doctrine, established in the eighth article of the same question, that the knowledge of God is the cause of things. The Molinists, on the contrary, seek to separate the thirteenth article of St. Thomas from the eighth, as if God's knowledge of future free actions were an exception to the general law that "God's knowledge is the cause of things."

Let us see what is stated in article 13. St. Thomas begins by connecting it with article 8. "Since, as was shown above," he says, "God knows all things, not only things actual but also things possible to Him and to the creature, and since some of these are future contingent to us, it follows that God knows future contingent things.

"In evidence of this we must consider that a contingent thing can be viewed in two ways; first, in itself, in so far as it is now in act, and in this sense it is not viewed as future, but as present;

[20] The Vatican Council, quoting the text from the Epistle to the Hebrews (4: 13), says: "*All things are naked and open to his eyes,* even those which are yet to be by the free action of creatures."

neither is it viewed as contingent, as having reference to one of two terms, but as determined to one; and on account of this it can be infallibly the object of certain knowledge, for instance to the sense of sight, as when I see that Socrates is sitting down. In another way a contingent thing can be viewed as it is in its cause; and in this way it is viewed as future, and as a contingent thing not yet determined to one. Forasmuch as a contingent cause has relation to opposite things, then in this sense a contingent thing is not subject to any certain knowledge. Hence, whoever knows a contingent effect in its cause only, has merely a conjectural knowledge of it. Now God knows all contingent things not only as they are in their causes, but also as each one of them is actually in itself. And although contingent things become actual successively, nevertheless God knows contingent things not successively, as they are in *their own being,* as we do, but simultaneously. The reason is because His knowledge is measured by eternity, as is also *His being;* and eternity being simultaneously whole comprises all time, as said above (q. 10, a. 2). Hence all things that are in time are present to God from eternity, not only because He has the types of things present within Him, as some say, but because His glance is carried from eternity over all things as they are in their presentiality. Hence it is manifest that contingent things are infallibly known by God, inasmuch as they are subject to the divine sight in their presentiality. Yet they are future contingent things in relation to their own causes."

Does this mean, as the Molinists would have it, that God's knowledge which is the cause of all things is not the cause of future contingent things, or at least of the conditionally free acts of the future, and that here we have an exception to the principles regulating the divine knowledge in general?

In this case we should have to say that the principle of causality admits of an exception, and we should have to maintain that the conditionally free acts of the future do not come from God, the

First Being. Moreover, we should have to maintain that God's knowledge is *passive* with regard to the conditionally free acts of the future, and that it is determined by them instead of determining them. Now there is nothing more absurd than to admit a passivity in pure Act. Finally, we should have to admit, as we shall see, that these conditionally free acts of the future have been all along infallibly determined of themselves, and this is the denial of freedom to these acts.

Moreover, we shall show that St. Thomas in various passages teaches most emphatically that *God knows the free acts of the future in the divine decree by which they are made present to Him from all eternity.*[21] In the article we have just quoted, St. Thomas presupposes that the divine decree[22] is the cause of all things, past, present, or future; but as He is here concerned merely with God's knowledge of the free acts of the future, he defers, until treating the subject of the divine will (Ia, q. 19, a. 8, 9; q. 22, a. 4), the question of how this divine will is infallibly efficacious without doing any violence to our free will.[23]

In the *Contra Gentes* (Bk. I, ch. lxviii), St. Thomas reunites these two aspects of the question so as to prove that God knows the secret movements of our will. His answer is as follows: "God knows them in Himself in so far as He is the universal principle of all beings and of all modes of being. . . . Since the divine Be-

[21] On this presentiality of future acts in eternity, cf. Cajetan's commentary on the *Summa*, Ia, q. 14, a. 13; also John of St. Thomas in his commentary *on the same article*. Thus the divine decree is the *medium* in which God knows the free acts of the future. Their presentiality in eternity is not a *medium*, but a *condition* for this knowledge to be intuitive. See St. Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 2, a. 12 ad 12um.

[22] In article 8 of the same question, he says practically the same thing: "Hence *His knowledge must be the cause of things, in so far as His will is joined to it*. Hence the knowledge of God as the cause of things is usually called the knowledge of approbation." This practical knowledge of God coupled with His divine decree is exactly what constitutes the divine decree.

[23] See Billuart, *De Deo*, diss. 6, a. 4, sec. 11. An accurate estimate is given of the opinion of St. Thomas. See also Guillermin, art. "S. Thomas et le prédéterminisme" in the *Revue thomiste*, 1895.

ing is the first of all beings and the cause of all beings, so the divine intellect is the first of intellects and the cause of all created intellectual operations. In knowing His being, God knows, therefore, whatever there may be in being, and in knowing His intellect and His will, He knows all thought and all volition. . . . The control which our will has over its acts, and in virtue of which it can, as it chooses, will or not will, presupposes that it is not by its nature determined to a certain act, and excludes the violent effect of an external agency, but not the influence exerted upon it by the supreme cause from which both being and action proceed. Moreover, the universal causality of the First Cause extends to our free acts, so that in knowing Himself God knows them." [24]

We find St. Thomas teaching the same about the divine will,[25]

[24] *Contra Gentes,* Bk. I, ch. lxviii: "We must show that God knows our mind's thoughts and our secret wills in their virtual causes, since He is the universal principle of being. For everything, in whatever way it exists, is known by God, inasmuch as He knows His essence, as we have shown above (ch. xlix) . . . God so knows other things in knowing His essence, as effects are known through their cause being known. Therefore by knowing his essence *God knows all things to which His causality extends. Now this extends to the works of the intellect and of the will.* . . .

"Even as His being is first and consequently the cause of all being, so His act of intelligence is first and consequently the cause of all intellectual operation. Wherefore just as God by knowing His being knows the being of everything, *so by knowing His act of intelligence and will, He knows every thought and will.* . . .

"The dominion which the will exercises over its own acts and by which it is in its power to will and not to will, removes the determination of the power to one thing and the violence of a cause acting from without; but it does not exclude the influence of a higher cause from which it has being and action. *Thus causality remains in the first cause which is God, in respect of the movements of the will; so that God is able to know them by knowing Himself.*" Cf. also *Contra Gentes,* Bk. III, chs. lxxxix–xci, xciv; and *Summa,* Ia IIae, q. 109, a. 1.

[25] Cf. Ia, q. 19, a. 8, where we read: "Since the divine will is *perfectly efficacious,* it follows not only that things are done, which God wills to be done, but also that they are done *in the way that He wills.* . . . From the very fact that nothing resists the divine will, it follows that not only those things happen that God wills to happen, but that they happen *necessarily or contingently* ac-

His providence,[26] His governance of the world,[27] His knowledge of our secret thoughts.[28]

How can God's eternal and infallibly efficacious decree leave the will free? St. Augustine (*Liber de correptione et gratia,* ch. xvi), in the explanation he gives of St. Paul's words (Philip. 2: 13), "For it is God who worketh in you, both to will and to accomplish," answers as follows: "Certainly we will, when we will; but He causes us to will what is good. . . . Certainly it is we who act when we act; but He causes us to act by enabling the will to act efficaciously. . . . When He says: I will cause you to act, what else does this mean than that He will take away the stony heart which was the cause of your inaction, and that He will give you a heart of flesh which will be the cause of your acting? And what does this mean but that He will take away from you that hard heart which was the cause of your not acting, and that He will give you a docile heart so that you will act?" In the fourteenth chapter of another work, St. Augustine again writes: "God has power over the heart, moving it from within, and He draws human beings to Himself by their wills influencing them; if, therefore, when God willed to establish kings on earth, *the wills of human beings are more in His power than in their own,*

cording to His will. See also *De veritate,* q. 24, a. 14: "Whether the free will can do any good deed without grace."

[26] See Ia, q. 22, a. 2 ad 4um: *"But since the act of free-will is traced to God as a cause, it necessarily follows that everything happening from the exercise of free-will must be subject to divine providence."* Also *Contra Gentes,* Bk. III, ch. xc.

[27] See Ia, q. 103, a. 5, 6, 7, 8; Ia, q. 105, a. 4, 5: "God moves the will by an interior inclination of the will." Also q. 106, a. 2: "And He alone can change this inclination, who bestowed on the creature the power to will." Cf. *De veritate,* q. 22, a. 8: "Every act of the will, inasmuch as it is an act, comes not only from the will as the immediate agent, but also from God as the first agent, who exerts a more marked influence. Hence, just as the will can decide otherwise, far more so can God do this. In article 9 of this question we read: *"Only God can incline the will to something else, as He wishes, from whom it receives its inclination."*

[28] See Ia, q. 57, a. 4; *De malo,* q. 16, a. 8.

who else causes it that chastisement is wholesome and that the heart being contrite there should be amendment of life?"

St. Thomas likewise reconciles the infallibility of divine foreknowledge and the freedom of our acts by appealing to the transcendent efficacy of the divine will. He writes: "When a cause is efficacious to act, the effect follows upon the cause, not only as to the thing done, but also as to its manner of being done or of being. Thus from defect of active power in the seed it may happen that a child is born unlike its father in accidental points that belong to its manner of being. Since, then, the *divine will* is *perfectly efficacious, it follows not only that things are done, which God wills to be done, but also that they are done in the way that He wills.* Now God wills some things to be done necessarily, some contingently, to the right ordering of things, for the building up of the universe. Therefore to some effects He has attached necessary causes that cannot fail; but to others defectible and contingent causes from which arise contingent effects." [29]

Under the leadership of a great general, the soldiers do not only *what must be done,* but as it must be done. "There is a way of doing things." And the way of a great general passes on to his soldiers. Far more so is this, too, the case with God as regards those beings created by Him.

There is certainly a *mystery* in this; it is that of the divine action, between which and our own there is merely a similarity by way of analogy, it not being possible for us to know for certain the mode of the divine action. But who could demonstrate that there is any *contradiction* in maintaining that the *Creator of the free will,* who is *more intimately associated* with the *will than freedom itself is,* can *infallibly move the will to determine itself freely to act?* Infallibility is not necessity.[30]

[29] *Summa,* Ia, q. 19, a. 8: "Whether the will of God imposes necessity on the things willed."

[30] Thus in the case of a regularly constructed syllogism, in which the major is a necessary proposition and the minor is contingent, the conclusion follows

We often say: I will see you without fail tomorrow. And, without failing to do so, we accomplish freely what we previously decided upon doing. Why could not God make us do freely what He Himself from all eternity had decided upon our doing? Since our will has the unlimited range of universal good by which it is specified, why, under the influence of the divine movement, can it not retain a dominating and active indifference concerning particular good, this latter being deemed incapable of invincibly attracting it? The connection between our will and this finite good remains always something contingent. In willing this good, the will *has the power* not to will it. The will, by reason of its universality, goes beyond it.[31] It is that which makes the act terminating our deliberation a *free act.* "It would be absurd to say," as Bossuet remarks, "that our own decision takes away our liberty. It would be no less absurd to say that God has taken it away by His decree. And just as our will in determining itself to choose one thing rather than another, does not take from itself the power of choosing between two things, we must conclude likewise that this decree of God does not do so." [32]

How could the divine motion destroy the contingency of the relationship existing between our will and a finite good, a con-

infallibly though being at the same time in itself a contingent statement. In other words, there is *necessity of consequence* and not necessity of *consequent,* as in the following example: The virtuous person is deserving of credit. Now the Apostles were models of virtue. Therefore they were deserving of credit. See also q. 14, a. 13 ad 1um, 2um, and 3um.

[31] *There remains in the will a potentiality for the opposite.* St. Thomas (Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 4 ad 1um) says: "The divine will extends not only to the doing of something by the thing which He moves, but also to its being done in a way which is fitting to the nature of that thing. And therefore it would be more repugnant to the divine motion *for the will to be moved of necessity* (that is *without having it in its power to choose the opposite*), which is not fitting to its nature, than for it to be moved freely, which is becoming to its nature." On this subject see also the other texts of St. Thomas as given and explained by Billuart in his *De Deo,* diss. 8, a. 4, sec. 2, which is entitled, *"Solvuntur objectiones ex laesione libertatis."* See also John of St. Thomas on the same subject in his *De Deo.*

[32] *Traité du libre arbitre,* ch. viii.

tingency which arises from the will not being necessitated in making a decision? Not only does God safeguard the freedom of our act, but He brings it about with us when the deliberation has become a reality. *The divine motion cannot do violence to our freedom, for it exerts its influence in conformity with the natural inclination of the will. First of all it takes the will on to its adequate object, which is universal good; and only after that does it direct the will toward an inadequate object consisting of some particular good.* Viewed in the first way, the divine motion *effects the freedom* of the act. It exerts its influence interiorly in the very depths of the will taken in the fullest capacity of its willing. It carries it confusedly through all the degrees of good before inclining it to reach out for some particular good.[33]

If there were any contradiction in maintaining that God can move our wills infallibly and freely, then the necessary application of the principle of causality is what would involve us hopelessly in absurdity. Let us not forget that what comes first in liberty is not human liberty. The idea of liberty is applied only *analogically* to God and human beings. There is merely a similarity of proportion between created liberty and the absolute liberty of God. It is a particular case of the mystery of the coexistence of finite beings with the infinite Being. How can the finite being exist apart from the infinite Being? It can exist only on condition that it is caused by Him and remains absolutely dependent upon Him. How can a secondary liberty exist apart from the primary liberty? It can exist only on condition that it is caused and moved by the latter, so that the faculty of willing passes from a state of *passive indifference* to one of *active indifference* contained in the very choice made by the faculty. Thus all the perfections of this

[33] See John of St. Thomas on Ia, q. 19, disp. 5, a. 6. We shall return to this subject in ch. iv, when we examine the antinomies with regard to freedom. See also appendix 4.

secondary liberty pre-exist eminently from all eternity in the primary liberty.

Why would God not have the power to produce infallibly in us and with us the freedom of our acts? It is certain that God cannot produce a vital act in a stone, since such an act must proceed from a vital power; but He can produce such an act in a living being. It is certain that God cannot produce in us a free act unless it be determined freely on our part. But why could He not move the will *fortiter et suaviter,* "vigorously and gently," to determine itself to act? "If the will were so moved *by another,* as in no way to be moved from *within itself,* the act of the will would not be imputed for reward or blame. But since its being moved *by another* does not prevent its being moved from *within itself,* it does not thereby forfeit the motive for merit or demerit" (Ia, q. 105, a. 4 ad 2um and 3um).

To maintain that God, as first cause, cannot produce with us and in us the free mode of our acts, is to maintain that a *mode of being* cannot be produced by the prime Being, who is the Creator of all the being there is outside Himself. Contrary to this, we must say with St. Thomas (Ia, q. 22, a. 4 ad 3um) that "*necessary* and *contingent* are consequent upon being as such. Hence the mode both of necessity and of contingency falls under the foresight of God, who provides universally for all being." St. Thomas explains this point more clearly in his commentary on the *Perihermenias* of Aristotle (Bk. I, lect. 14), saying: "We must conceive of the divine will as existing outside of the order of created beings, as a cause which produces the whole of being, and all the differences or modes of being. Now the necessary and contingent are precisely the primary modes into which being is divided." [84]

[84] "We must conceive of the *divine will* as existing outside of the order of beings, *as a certain cause which permeates the whole of being and all its differences.* But the possible and the necessary differentiate being, and therefore the

In his commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* (Bk. VI, lect. 3), St. Thomas uses the same formal expressions.

We may sum up all this teaching in the famous passage of the *Summa* (Ia, q. 83, a. 1): "Free will is the *cause* of its own movement, because by his free will man moves himself to act. But it does not of necessity belong to liberty that what is free should be the first cause of itself, as neither for one thing to be the cause of another need it be the first cause. God, therefore, is the first cause who moves causes both natural and voluntary. And just as by moving natural causes He does not prevent their acts being natural, so by moving voluntary causes *He does not deprive their actions of being voluntary: but rather is He the cause of this very thing in them;* for He operates in each thing according to its own nature." [35] According to St. Thomas, intrisically efficacious grace

necessary and contingent in things originate from the will itself of God."

St. Thomas says also (*De malo*, q. 6, a. 1 ad 3um): *"God indeed moves the will irrevocably on account of the efficacy of the motive power,* which cannot fail. But considering the nature of the will which is moved, in that it is indifferently disposed towards various things, *it is not necessitated,* but remains free. Since also divine Providence operates in all things, nevertheless we find contingent effects to be the result of contingent causes, in that *God moves all things proportionately, each of them according to their mode of acting."*

[35] Cf. Ia, q. 83, a. 1 ad 3um. *"Movendo causas voluntarias, non aufert, quin actiones earum sint voluntariae, sed potius hoc in eis facit; operatur enim in unoquoque secundum ejus proprietatem."*

It is sometimes objected that St. Thomas (Ia IIae, q. 9, a. 6 ad 3um) wrote: "God moves man's will as the universal Mover, to the universal object of the will, which is good. And *without this universal motion,* man cannot will anything. But man determines himself by his reason, to will this or that which is true or apparent good. Nevertheless, sometimes God moves some specially to the willing of something determinate, which is good; such is the case with those whom He moves by grace." The word "sometimes" signifies that at times the will is moved to a particular good, without its moving itself to it (Ia, q. 63, a. 5).

It cannot be concluded from this passage that the divine motion, according to St. Thomas, does not move our will to determine itself in making the choice, and that it directs the will only in willing universal good.

Opposed to this interpretation we have article 4 of the next question (*i. e.*, Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 4), the purpose of which is to state precisely the way in which God moves the will to act freely; and we have the principles and the numerous passages quoted from St. Thomas, which contain the same doctrine

does not destroy the freedom of our acts, but is the cause of it.

When we come to speak of God's omnipotence (n. 52, c), we shall have to define more clearly the nature of the divine motion. We will also solve the objections made against Thomism on this point, when we discuss the antinomies with reference to freedom (nn. 64, 65).

This sublime teaching of St. Thomas finds its confirmation in the fact that, according to the Thomists, every other explanation of God's foreknowledge of the future inevitably ends in contradiction. We speak here of a contradiction and not of a mystery, because these theories, instead of descending from universal and necessary principles to explain a particular and obscure case, propose from the outset a gratuitous solution that involves the very denial of the absolute universality and necessity of the principles.

To explain God's foreknowledge of the free acts of the future, Molina proposed a theory that no one, so far as he knew, had ever taught.[36] We would look in vain for such a theory in the writings

as that found in the article just mentioned. Finally, the authentic interpretation of this text is given us by St. Thomas in Ia IIae, q. 111, a. 2, entitled: "Whether grace is fittingly divided into *operating* and *co-operating grace*." In it he says: "The operation of an effect is not attributed to the thing moved, but to the mover. *Hence in that effect in which our mind is moved and does not move, but in which God is the sole mover, the operation is attributed to God,* and it is with reference to this, that we speak of *'operating grace.' But in that effect in which our mind both moves and is moved, the operation is not only attributed to God, but also to the soul;* and it is with reference to this that we speak of *co-operating grace.*"

Canon 20 of the Council of Orange (529) says: "God does many good things in man, which man does not do (operating grace). But there is no good work done by man which God has not assisted him in doing (co-operating grace)." And canon 22 states: "No one can claim as his own anything except lying and sin." (Denzinger, 193, 195.) God's concurrence in the natural order is required for merely naturally good acts.

[36] "*Haec nostra ratio conciliandi libertatem arbitrii cum divina praedestinatione, a nemine quem viderim hucusque tradita:* no one, so far as I can see, has ever proposed this method of ours of reconciling free will with divine predestination." *Concordia liberi arbitrii cum divina praescientia,* q. 23, a. 5. The Jesuits, Vasquez and Fonseca, also acknowledge that this theory is not to be found in the writings of the Church Fathers, or in those of earlier Scholastics.

of earlier theologians or of the Church Fathers. Molina says: "God has a very profound and unfathomable comprehension of each free will. He sees clearly what each free cause would do of its own accord in such and such circumstances, and even in an infinite number of circumstances. This view which God has, we call *"middle knowledge."* [37]

This knowledge is called middle by reason of its proper object, which is the conditional future or the conditionally free act of the future. It is intermediate between the purely possible which is the object of God's knowledge of simple intelligence, and the contingent future which is the object of God's knowledge of vision. By this middle knowledge, according to Molina, God knows, previous to any predetermining decree, how a free will would act if placed in certain circumstances, and how in certain other cases it would decide otherwise. After that God decides, according to His benevolent designs, to render this free will effective by placing it in those circumstances more or less favorable or unfavorable to it.

So then, according to Molina, God by His "supercomprehensive knowledge of secondary causes," *sees in the free cause itself,* that in certain circumstances this cause will act in such a manner, and that it will determine itself to act in this way. This divine foresight is not the result of a more or less probable conjecture, but is an *infallible* knowledge of the conditional future.

To this the Thomists have always replied [38] that the middle knowledge conceived to safeguard the freedom of the human will, virtually implies the denial of it. How can God see in a cause, which by its nature is undetermined as to whether it will act or not, that it will *de facto* act? The supercomprehensive knowledge of a

See Dummermuth, O.P., *S. Thomas et doctrina praemotionis physicae* (1886), p. 760.

[37] *Concordia,* q. 14, a. 13, disp. 52.

[38] Cf. John of St. Thomas, Salmanticenses, Gonet, Gotti, Billuart (*De Deo,* diss. 6, a. 4, sec. 1); H. Gayraud, *Thomisme et Molinisme,* p. 119.

cause cannot enable anyone to see in it a determination which is not there. And if, in reply, we are told that this determination is known through the circumstances in which the free will would be placed, the theory ends fatally in Determinism, which is the denial of free will. The foreseeing of the circumstances may enable one, indeed, to form conjectures, but not to have an infallible knowledge of the conditionally free acts of the future. Cardinal Mazella, S.J., admitted this to be so, in agreement with the Thomists.[39]

With Suarez and many Molinists, Cardinal Mazella tries to defend the middle knowledge by saying that God sees the conditional futures neither in His will nor in ours nor in the motives or circumstances influencing the act, but that He sees them in their *objective or formal truth.*

But the Thomists reply by asking how, previous to any decree from God, a conditionally free act of the future is objectively true rather than false. Suarez and Mazella [40] prove it in the following manner: "Of two conditional contradictory propositions, such as: If Peter were placed in these circumstances, he would sin and he would not sin; the one is definitely true and the other is definitely false. It is impossible, indeed, for both to be true or both to be false. Therefore the infinite intelligence which penetrates all truth, sees certainly which of the two is true and which is false."

The Thomists reply that this is still the denial of freedom for the will. From it we should even be led to conclude that, previous to any divine decree, God can see which of the following contradictory propositions is true: The world will exist (come into existence), the world will not come into existence. From this it would follow that creation is no longer a free act, and the divine will would be subjected to the logical fatalism of the Stoics. As Cicero relates (*De divin.*, I, 55), the Stoics really intended to prove Determinism precisely by the argument that, of two contradictory

[39] *De gratia,* disp. 3, a. 7.
[40] *Loc. cit.*

propositions, one is necessarily true. Therefore, between the two propositions, "A will be, A will not be," the necessity of one of them, at the very moment when I am uttering it, excludes the possibility of the other: "From all eternity is the flow of imperishable truth."

Suarez forgets that Aristotle, in his *Perihermenias* (Bk. I, ch. ix) [41] has shown that of two contradictory propositions which are particular ones and which concern a contingent future event, neither is *positively* true or false. If it were otherwise, as Aristotle remarks, the truth would be in Determinism and our choice would not be a free one.[42]

In vain some Molinists seek to avoid this difficulty by saying that God knows the truth of conditionally future things not in themselves but in His own essence, which contains eminently all truth.

It is clear that a contingent truth cannot be determined in the divine essence previous to any divine decree. It would be present there *on the same grounds* as absolutely necessary truths, and hence would be a necessary truth.

[41] See St. Thomas, commentary, lect. 13.

[42] Here is how St. Thomas interprets the mind of Aristotle. The question to be answered is this: In *particular* enunciations *referring to contingent future events,* must one of the contraries be *positively* true and the other false?

The answer is categorical: "In particular statements which concern the future, it is not necessary for one to be *positively* true and the other false. And this is said, indeed, of those things that are contingent." The reason for this is as follows: "That which has an inclination for either of two things, has the characteristic that one cannot say definitely of it whether it shall or shall not be, because it is not determined more for one thing than for the other. . . . If every affirmation or negation in particular propositions concerning future things must be either true or false, then everyone affirming or denying must definitely say either what is true or what is false. From this *it follows that everything must either be or not be.* . . . From this he further concludes that everything is the result of necessity, by which contingency of three kinds is excluded. . . . For some things happen in the minority of cases. . . . But in some kinds that happen there is an alternative, because the agent is not swayed more one way than the other; and these *are the result of choice.* But indeed,

St. Thomas wrote concerning prophecy as follows: "The contingent free things of the future are not knowable in themselves, because their truth is not determined. Contingent things of the future, the truth of which is not determined, are not knowable in themselves" (IIa IIae, q. 171, a. 3).

Concerning the Molinists and in general those who defend the theory of middle knowledge, Leibniz remarks: "It is amusing to see how they torment themselves to find a way out of a labyrinth when there is absolutely no way out. . . . Therefore they will never get out of the difficulty unless they admit that there is a predetermination in the preceding state of the creature which inclines it to determine itself to act" (*Théodicée,* Part I, sec. 48). In these words just quoted, Leibniz gives us his own solution, which is Psychological Determinism, in which there is nothing left of liberty except the name.

"It is sufficient," he says, "for the creature to be predetermined by its previous state, by which it is swayed more one way than the other. And all these closely associated actions of the creature and of all creatures were represented in the divine intellect and known to God by His knowledge of simple intelligence, before He had decreed to give them existence. From this we see that, to account for God's foreknowledge of things, we can dispense with both the middle knowledge of the Molinists, and predetermination such as it was taught by Bannez or Alvarez" (*Théod.,* Part I, sec. 47). Leibniz is consistent, but he ends in Determinism. Does not the theory of middle knowledge also lead inevitably to this conclusion?

This is not the only inconvenience of this theory. It attacks God's universal causality and supreme dominion over all things, and consequently renders His knowledge passive with regard to

things happen, however, in the majority of cases. . . . But if all things came about by necessity, none of these things would be contingent."

our free determinations of which we alone are the cause. God ceases to be the universal cause of being, since the free determination on our part, which is some being, is not produced by Him in us and with us. He is no longer master of the will; His grace remains powerless, *it loses its suavity of appeal because it has lost its power.*[43] There is also no more any need of praying to the Savior, of placing all our hope and trust in Him instead of in ourselves. The soul, in the grip of temptation, cannot say to Him: "Convert me, and I shall be converted; for Thou art the Lord my God" (Jer. 31: 18). God is no more the cause of our good than of our bad deeds, since it depends solely upon our free will whether divine grace is effective or ineffective.

Man alone is the cause of his freely determining himself to act and of the good use he makes of grace. Contrary to the words of St. Paul, it is man himself who does the distinguishing. *"For who distinguisheth thee,"* says the Apostle, *"or what hast thou that thou hast not received?"* (I Cor. 4: 7).

Instead of viewing our will and the divine motion as *two total causes,* one of which is subordinate to the other in such a way that *our act,* so far as there is good in it, *comes entirely from God as the primary cause,* and *entirely from man as the secondary cause,* the Molinists view them as *two partial causes,* like two men hauling a boat.[44] Hence God's external causality, as it affects us,

[43] See Billuart, *De Deo,* diss. 6, a. 6, sec. 6; and Del Prado, *De gratia et libero arbitrio,* Part III, ch. v (1907 ed., pp. 117–174). This remarkable work of Del Prado is the best Thomistic treatise on grace which has appeared since the great commentators of the 16th and 17th centuries. It may be classed among the works of Bannez, Alvarez, John of St. Thomas, Massoulié, and Goudin. The first volume is a commentary on St. Thomas' Treatise on grace. The second volume shows how there is harmony between free will and grace according to the teachings of St. Thomas and St. Augustine. The third volume examines this agreement as it is conceived by Molina, Suarez, Bellarmine, or by the theologians who sought a middle way between Thomism and Molinism, such as Cardinals Satolli and Pecci and Bishop Paquet.

[44] St. Thomas, speaking of predestination (Ia, q. 23, a. 5: Whether the foreknowledge of merits is the cause of predestination), after pointing out the errors of Origen, the Pelagians, and the Semi-Pelagians, definitely rejects the

proves to be rather mediocre and is like created causality. Our free will *participates* with God in the work of salvation and claims the better part of it. Since God's knowledge is no longer the cause of our free acts, the result is that it must be passive with regard to them. Instead of determining them, it is determined by them. And what is there more inadmissible than to admit a state of passivity in the Being who is pure Act?

Certainly, Thomism has its obscurities. It does not take upon itself to show how the transcendent efficacy of the first cause, instead of clashing with our freedom, brings about in us and with

teaching of those who view divine motion and the freedom of the human will as merely two partial causes such as we find exemplified in the case of two men pulling a boat. "And so others said that merits following the effect of predestination are the reason of predestination; giving us to understand that God gives grace to a person, and pre-ordains that He will give it, because He knows beforehand that he will make good use of it, as if a king were to give a horse to a soldier because he knows that he will make good use of it. *But these seem to have drawn a distinction between that which flows from grace and that which flows from free will, as if the same thing cannot come from both. . . . Now there is no distinction between what flows from free will, and what is of predestination; as there is no distinction between what flows from a secondary and from a first cause.* For the providence of God produces effects through the operation of secondary causes. Wherefore, that which flows from free will is also of predestination. . . . Whatever is in man, disposing him towards salvation, is all included under the effect of salvation; even the preparation for grace. For neither does this happen otherwise than by divine help, according to the prophet Jeremias (Lam. 5: 21): "Convert us, O Lord, to thee, and we shall be converted."

Molina and Suarez depart from St. Thomas in the general doctrine of the *subordination of causes.* The divine concurrence (which is simultaneous) and our action, grace, and free will, the light of glory and the intellect of the blessed (which is an active and obediential potency)—these they view as partial and subordinate causes. The same must be said of the human intellect and the freedom of the human will, when a decision has been made, and it seems also the same must be said for the cognitive faculty and its object.

Moreover, the Suarezian thesis concerning the divine concurrence is closely connected with that Suarezian principle which denies there is any real distinction between essence and existence in creatures. St. Thomas, on the contrary, maintains that *the creature does not exist of itself and is not capable of acting of itself. The mode of action follows the mode of being.* Only He who is self-existing can be *self-acting.* Since we depend upon God for our being, we depend upon Him in our *action.*

us even that our acts are performed freely, in such a way that we still remain responsible. It is only by way of analogy that we can acquire a knowledge of the supreme efficacy of the first creative cause: what properly constitutes it as such remains necessarily a mystery for us.[45]

Father Lepidi very truly says: "So long as each of the two systems, the Thomistic and the Molinistic, confines itself to a consideration of the strength of its position and attacks the other in its weak points, there will be no end to this controversy. The two systems must be compared, as regards their development and their conclusions, elucidated by the general and evident rules which are admitted by both sides. If we proceed in this manner, undoubtedly there will still remain many profound obscurities in the two systems, which the intellect will never succeed in clearing up. But at least it will be seen that the obscurity in the Thomistic system is due to the weakness of our poor intellect which, though it knows that between the divine and human causality there is harmony prevailing, is unable to know how this is so. On the other hand, the obscurity in the opposing system results in veritable impossibilities." [46]

The controversy between Thomism and Molinism may be reduced to this: Does Thomism end in obscurity through the legitimate and necessary application of the most universal of first principles (identity, causality, and the universal causality of the prime agent)? It is difficult to deny this. In virtue of the principle

[45] Cf. *infra*, n. 52: Omnipotence and divine motion; also nn. 64 and 65: The freedom of the human will and God's universal causality. Moral evil and the divine causality.

[46] *Opuscules philosophiques*, ch. i (On the voluntary activity of man and the divine causality), *circa finem*. Gardeil, O.P., *Le donné révélé et la théologie*, Part II, ch. iii. (The theological systems), says: "The theological systems which posit a universal notion as the key of their synthesis, striving to interpret the idea itself of God, exert retroactively a more powerful influence than do those systems which are based upon a particular hypothesis. We have an example of this in the case of Molinism and Thomism."

of identity, God alone is His own existence. It follows that He alone is His actuating principle, for operation follows being; and as God alone is His own being, so He alone is His principle of action. No created being exists of itself. Consequently no created being acts of itself; it receives its existence from God and can act only if moved by God. A secondary cause acts only in so far as it is moved by the primary cause; a created intellect acts only as moved by the primary intellect; secondary freedom, viewed precisely as freedom, acts only in so far as it is moved by the primary freedom. All movement implying the participation of a pure perfection (*simpliciter simplex,* of an absolutely simple one), evidently is dependent upon the corresponding divine perfection. It is absolutely impossible for anything which is contingent not to be caused by necessary Being, the source of all being. What is not self-existent, exists by reason of another which is self-existent. The principles of Thomism are such that it fears neither logic nor mystery. It is even logic which causes Thomism to end in obscurity. How does the supreme efficacy of God's creative power produce in us and with us, *suaviter et fortiter,* the freedom of our acts? A method of reasoning that is most rigorous cannot lead us into an obscurity in which a contradiction would be lurking. It is only a mystery we have here, a result of the mystery of creation (the co-existence of the finite and the Infinite), which is analogous to the mystery of how we are to reconcile God's liberty with His immutability. There could be no contradiction unless, as Hegel would have it, reality were fundamentally a realized contradiction.

Molinism also has its obscurity, which is middle knowledge. But how does it arrive at this latter? Is it by the necessary application of the most universal of first principles which dominate the whole science of theology even to its least details? Is it not rather that by this system a solution may be found for a special difficulty concerning the freedom of the human will? This method of procedure may be adopted in polemical arguments, but

it is not the method of science. The Thomist synthesis has given proofs of its capacity regarding all points of theological knowledge. Molinism is merely an opinion in a particular controversy. In the solution of particular and obscure cases, we must start from evident and universal principles. In these cases we cannot propose, regardless of the principles, an apparently convenient solution, with uncertain advantages obtained by the denial of the very principles. It would be said that we are afraid to face both logic and the mysterious. In the obscurity to which this method would lead us, there would lie hidden, not a mystery, but a veritable contradiction or antinomy. By this faulty method, Molinism is induced, first of all, to admit that there is an exception to the principle of causality: that the entity of future free acts does not come from God, the first Being.[47] In the second place, Molinism is induced to maintain that God's knowledge is passive with regard to the conditionally free acts of the future, which determine this knowledge instead of being determined by it. Thus middle knowledge, by positing a passivity in pure Act, could not be a pure perfection, one which is *simpliciter simplex* (absolutely simple). It is an anthropomorphic idea which attributes to God a human perfection. Lastly, this theory, conceived to safeguard the freedom of the human will, must end logically in the determinism of the circumstances.

All these impossibilities are a confirmation of the teaching given us by St. Thomas, and before him by St. Augustine, a doctrine which faithfully reflects the Gospel narrative and the teaching of St. Paul,[48] who says: "It is God who worketh in you,

[47] The divine and simultaneous concurrence admitted by Molina is but imperfectly the cause of the entity of our free acts; for it is not the first cause of our freely determining ourselves to act, which also falls under being. This divine concurrence, far from determining in a transcendental manner our free will to move itself to act, is determined by it. This is a reversal of the parts assigned to each. See *infra*, n. 52, c.

[48] See the commentaries of St. Thomas on the Gospel of St. John (ch. xv, lesson 3), on the Epistle to the Romans (ch. i, lesson 3; ch. viii, lesson 6; ch. ix,

both to will and to accomplish, according to His good will."[49] "Who distinguisheth thee? Or what hast thou that thou hast not received?"[50] "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."[51] To depreciate the meaning and import of these texts is to rob the word of God and theology of its treasures, of its simplicity, and of its depth of meaning.

Divine Providence. Having fully developed, in the previous discussion, the Thomistic doctrine of God's foreknowledge, there remains little to be said about divine Providence. Moreover, we discussed this by the a posteriori method in the study already made of the proof of God's existence based upon design in the universe.

There is a resemblance, by way of analogy, between divine providence and human prudence. Providence is the extension of God's wisdom, which "reacheth from end to end mightily and ordereth all things sweetly" (Wisdom 8:3; and 14:3). "As God," says St. Thomas, "is the cause of things by His intellect, it is necessary that the type of the order of things toward their end should pre-exist in the divine mind; and the type of things ordered toward an end is, properly speaking, providence" (Ia, q. 22, a. 1).

lesson 3), and on the Epistle to the Ephesians (ch. i, lessons 1 and 4). We may compare St. Thomas' interpretation of St. Paul's texts with that given by Father Prat, who favors Molinism, in his work, *The Theology of St. Paul.* The texts of St. Paul are far more striking in their simplicity than those of St. Thomas. work. For their simplicity these interpretations surpass those of St. Thomas. Moreover, they repeat the doctrine contained in Ecclesiasticus (33:11–14): "As the potter's clay is in his hand to fashion and order it, so man is in the hand of him that made him; and he will render to him according to his judgment. All his ways are according to his ordering." See also Ezechiel (11:19): "And I will give them one heart and will put a new spirit in their bowels: and I will take away the stony heart out of their flesh and will give them a heart of flesh."

[49] Phil. 2:13.

[50] See I Cor. 4:7.

[51] Rom. 9:16.

Does this providence extend merely to the general laws of the universe and not to individual things and their smallest details, as the Deists have claimed? The Gospel says: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are numbered. Fear not therefore: better are you than many sparrows" (Matt. 10:29–31). The absolute universality of providence is deduced from the absolute universality of divine causality, which is that of an intelligent agent. "The causality of God extends to all being, both to things corruptible as to those incorruptible, and as to the constituent principle of their species as well as to their individualizing principles (for these also are included in the term 'being'). Hence all things that exist in whatsoever manner are necessarily directed by God toward some end" (Ia, q. 22, a. 2). The principle of finality necessarily demands that this be so. Every agent acts for an end, and the supreme Agent for an end known to Him, an end to which all things are subordinated. This end is the manifestation of His goodness, of His infinite perfection, and of His various attributes.

Thus evil, even moral evil, is permitted by divine providence, because God is powerful and good enough to bring good out of the very evil. It is natural for a creature to fail at times, since by its very nature it is defective. God permits this failure that He may show His mercy the more, or, when His mercy has been despised, that He may show His justice and the absolute rights of the sovereign Good to be loved above all things (Ia, q. 22, a. 2 ad 2um; q. 23, a. 5 ad 3um). This problem will again present itself when we come to the discussion of these two attributes.

Are all things immediately subject to providence, or must we admit certain providential intermediaries, appointed like ministers to attend to the details of things? There are intermediaries, says St. Thomas, only for the execution of the plan of divine providence, but not for the determination of this plan, which even

in its smallest details is decreed immediately by God. If it were otherwise, God's practical knowledge would be imperfect and would not extend so far as His causality does, without which latter absolutely nothing comes into existence (Ia, q. 22, a. 3). Thus, so that all things may be immediately subject to it, providence does not divest certain things of their contingency but wonderfully preserves this intact in them. It disposes everything in the universe in such a way that certain things always take place, others frequently, and some very seldom. It moves our free wills in such a manner that in choosing some good we retain the power of not choosing it, or of preferring another to it (Ia, q. 22, a. 4).

Predestination is that part of providence which concerns our salvation. We shall discuss this briefly in the solution of the antinomies which concern God's benevolence.[52] But the limits imposed upon us in this work do not allow us to follow St. Thomas in the study of this problem which is of the supernatural order. It will be seen, upon reading the *Summa* (Ia, q. 23), that St. Thomas applies the universal principles which we have previously examined in connection with God's foreknowledge.

It is particularly concerning this last mentioned attribute that divine wisdom remains for us, as St. Paul says, an unfathomable mystery, by reason of its sublimity and profundity. It is unfathomable also by reason of its benevolence, of its free preferences which are their own *raison d'être* (Ia, q. 25, a. 5 ad 3um). Why is it that one sinner is converted just a few moments before death, whereas another is taken by surprise, dying in a state of sin? To this question there is only one answer for all theologians: "O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God. How incomprehensible are His judgments and how unsearchable His ways. For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been His counsellor? Or who hath first given to Him and recom-

[52] See ch. IV, n. 62.

pense shall be made to him" (Rom. 11: 33–35). So also "the foolish things of the world hath God chosen, that He may confound the wise: and the weak things of the world hath God chosen, that He may confound the strong. And things that are not He hath chosen as instruments, that no flesh should glory in His sight" (I Cor. 1: 27).

However unfathomable it may be, this divine wisdom is obscure for us only because of its too great brilliance. The sun must seem obscure to the eyes of an owl unable to endure such brightness. However limited our intellect may be, it is nevertheless certain that divine wisdom ordains absolutely all things for good and that under its direction even evil must contribute to the sum total of perfection. We are incomparably more certain of the rectitude and holiness of God's mysterious ways, than of the rectitude of our own conscience. This sublime wisdom, which is too bright for our weak eyes, directs us at every moment and in the most insignificant actions of our life. It is more intimate to us than we are to ourselves. With one ray of its light it illumines faithful and fervent souls. These souls become the recipients of a savory knowledge, for the word *"sapientia"* implies in the Latin *"sapida scientia,"* or a savory knowledge. It is an experimental knowledge of divine things, and these souls come gradually by divine guidance to a simple consideration of all things as they relate to God (IIa IIae, q. 45).

Only this divine wisdom knows how to effect a practical reconciliation between the absolute rigor of the principles and the necessary suavity of their infinitely various applications. God, the beginning and end of all things, cannot for one moment forget the absolute necessity of the principles. He directs all things firmly. But He also knows in a wonderful way the thousand details of each life. Moreover, He loves His works and, above all, His children. Thus there is a suavity in His direction of things which in no way yields to force, and He protects the

divine seeds which He has sown in the hearts of human beings. "He will not break the bruised reed, and He will not quench the smoking flax." Wisdom "reacheth therefore from end to end mightily and ordereth all things sweetly" (Wisdom 8: 1).

50) *The free will and love of God.*

We have just spoken of the divine intellect. The will follows the intellect, and the very first act of the will is love. "God is charity" (I John 4: 16). We will first consider God's love of Himself and then His love of creatures.

God's love of Himself. How could an intelligent being be deprived of the power of willing and of loving? There is a natural inclination in all things by which they tend to seek what is good for them and then, upon attaining it, to remain at rest. Thus the natural tendency of an acorn is to germinate; of an oak to develop itself, to keep itself alive, and reproduce its kind. An intelligent being possesses this particular trait, that it knows what is good for it. It must therefore go in quest thereof and in a special manner rest therein by an inclination regulated by the intellect. The name "will" has been given to this inclination. The divine intellect, knowing what is good, cannot exist apart from the divine will, that wills what is good (Ia, q. 19, a. 1).

This divine will cannot be a mere faculty capable of acting, of performing numerous acts in succession. It would be imperfect if it were not essentially and always in act. Now the very first act of every will is to love the good. This love is entirely spiritual, as the intellectual knowledge is by which it is directed. All the acts of the will proceed from love, which is the very awakening of the will as it comes in contact with the good. These acts are known as desiring, enjoying, hoping, willing, choosing or even hating. Desire or hope is the love of a future good, and sadness comes from the love of good which has passed. Hatred is the

reverse of love, for nothing is hated except as it is opposed to the object of love (Ia, q. 20, a. 1). When love is the result of knowledge acquired from sense perception, it is merely a passion, an emotion. When it is the result of purely spiritual knowledge, it is itself entirely spiritual.

There is, then, necessarily in God an entirely spiritual and eternal act of the love of supreme Good. Now this supreme Good, loved from all eternity, is God Himself who is infinite perfection, the plenitude of being, who loves Himself as much as He is lovable, which is infinitely. This love is not a desire or a hope. God possesses the supreme Good from all eternity and necessarily delights in it without any possibility of being separated from it. God cannot cease loving Himself, for His will is goodness itself always actually loved. Because of its depth and intensity, this love is rightly called zeal. It is like a burning and eternally subsistent flame. "God is a consuming fire" (Deut. 4:24). Love as well as joy belongs therefore to God in the strict sense of the terms. They are absolute and analogous perfections like the good by which they are specified. An utterly base interpretation may be given to the word "love"; but we know that it can express a perfection so sublime and so pure that we would look in vain for imperfection in it.

On the other hand, desire, sadness, and anger cannot be attributed to God except in a metaphorical sense. There is always an element of imperfection accompanying these sentiments. They presuppose either the absence of some good or the presence of some evil (Ia, q. 20, a. 2 ad 2um).

There is no trace of egoism in God's love for Himself. Its essential trait is to be infinitely holy. Egoism consists in preferring oneself to the supreme Good. God is the supreme Good, and in loving Himself it is this supreme Good which He loves above all things with a holy love. What then is holiness? It is an unchangeable purity and is the opposite of the defilement of sin

and imperfection. Being unchangeable, it is the contrary of inconstancy in the performance of good (IIa IIae, q. 81, a. 8). Let us give each of these expressions its due consideration.

God's love is absolutely pure. How could it be stained by sin, which means a turning away from God? How could God turn from Himself, go against the law which identifies Himself with His very nature? Not only is God impeccable, but He must hate sin with a holy hatred,[53] since it is the rigorous consequence of His love of the supreme Good. By reason of the depth and intensity of this love it merits the name of zeal. How could it consort with evil or seek to effect a compromise with it? With regard to obstinacy in evil-doing, love, which is sweetness itself, becomes as hard as hell, says the Canticle of Canticles: "Love is strong as death, jealousy as hard as hell" (8:6). God is mighty and jealous, we read in Exodus 20:5. Viewed in this light, hell itself seems to be a manifestation of the purity and sanctity of God's love. That love is attractive and formidable, sweet and terrible, like the house of God spoken of by Jacob (Gen. 28:17).

Removed from all that is evil, the love of God is also without any trace of imperfection, there being nothing in Him which is opposed to infinite perfection. If this absolute purity is absolutely immutable, then it is sanctity in the highest degree. How could it be otherwise?

Can God's love of the supreme Good be something wavering and inconstant? Can God cease to be the supreme Good, can He cease to know and love Himself? Not only is there an irrevocable adherence of divine love to the sovereign Good, but it is absolutely identified with this Good which is always loved. God could not find any reason, even the least convincing, for not loving the su-

[53] It is a probable opinion, according to certain Thomists such as Billuart, that this holy hatred of evil properly and formally belongs to God. Vasquez and Suarez are of the same opinion. On the other hand, according to John of St. Thomas, hatred of evil is contained only virtually in God, just as punishment or repression of evil demanded by the love of good are so found in Him.

preme good or for preferring to it anything else whatever. Perfect holiness, like that of the blessed in heaven, is not free to fall away from this state, to do what is evil. It rises far above this wretched liberty, for it implies that it is under the necessity of loving the good (Ia, q. 19, a. 3, 7, 9).

God's love for created beings. If God's love of Himself is of such a nature, what is His attitude toward beings other than Himself?

May it not be that to love another being exposes oneself to the possibility of finding this love spurned? Can it be that God's love for His creatures meets with such opposition and contempt?

The love of another seems, then, to imply imperfections that cannot be found in God. So say the Deists. God, such as they conceive Him to be, loves only Himself, is not at all kindly disposed toward His creatures, has no love for His children, no consideration for our sufferings, pays no attention to our prayers.

On closer examination we see that these imperfections in the love of another, are imperfections of created love. The uncreated love of God for His creatures is in no way passive. It is essentially active and creative, entirely generous, absolutely free in the gift bestowed and yet perfectly regulated by divine wisdom.

Again, God's love for His creatures is an invincible power. There is no resisting it without God's permission, and everything, even evil, becomes conducive of good. Let us consider carefully each of these significant expressions.

First, God's love for us cannot be called passive. He who is the plenitude of all goodness cannot be attracted by created good, remain passive under the attraction of this lowest kind of good, and be captivated by it. God's love for us, says St. Thomas, does not presuppose lovableness in us, but, on the contrary, posits or creates it in us. "The love of God infuses and creates goodness" (Ia, q. 20, a. 2). It is not because God has found us lovable that

He loves us, but it is because He has loved us that we are lovable in His sight. "What hast thou which thou hast not received?" says the Apostle St. Paul; "and if thou hast received, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" (I Cor. 4:7). Molinism partly forgets this profound truth, when it maintains that what is best in us—the good use of our free will and of grace—comes from ourselves alone, and not from God. Of ourselves we are only nothingness and sin.[54] All the natural and supernatural good that we have, can come to us only from the source of all good, from a benevolent and generous love which nothing in us could call forth.

Why, then, has God loved us with that creative love, when there is nothing in us which could have attracted Him? (Ia, q. 19, a. 2.) Is it not a property of good for it to be diffusive, to give generously of itself? Goodness is essentially communicative; good is diffusive of itself. In the material order, we observe that the sun imparts its light and vivifying heat to all that comes in contact with it. In the intellectual order, when the intellect has arrived at the knowledge of truth, it spontaneously seeks to impart this to others. In the moral order, those with a holy ardor for goodness, like the Apostles, have no rest until these same aspirations, this same love, are aroused in others. God is sovereign Good, plenitude of being, eternal love of goodness, zeal for love, is it not, therefore, most fitting for Him to bestow on others these riches contained in Himself, just as a singer is happy making others enjoy the harmonies contained in his singing?

This appropriateness is so pronounced that many philosophers[55] have thought that God, who is under the necessity of loving Himself, must also necessarily create. They say He would

[54] Canon 22 of the Second Council of Orange: "No one can claim as his own anything but lying and sin." Denzinger, n. 195.

[55] Plato, Plotinus, Leibniz, Guenther, Rosmini. According to those who defend the theory of absolute optimism, God must of necessity create, and must create the best possible world.

be neither good nor wise unless He created, and that He would be, as it were, sparing of the good which He possesses, as one who is barren and impotent. According to these philosophers, God loves us because of a necessity intrinsic to His nature or to His wisdom. It is morally necessary, they hold, for God to create, just as it is physically necessary for the sun to impart its light and heat to all that comes in contact with it. Hence the world appears to be a necessary emanation from God or a sort of prolongation of the divine nature. It comes from God somewhat after the manner that light comes from the sun. Thus this Determinism leads to Pantheism, which denies that there is an essential and infinite distinction between the created and the uncreated.

The Catholic Church [56] rejects this doctrine which fails to recognize the absolute freedom of God's creative love and the gratuitous nature of the gifts we have received. It is certainly in the highest degree fitting that God should love us and create us, but it is merely a fittingness without the least trace of moral necessity. Cajetan, in his commentary on the *Summa* (Ia, q. 19, a. 2), explains it in this way. In beings that act according to the laws of nature, he says, reproduction of their kind is a natural and necessary perfection. In beings endowed with freedom of will, to give of themselves is a *free perfection*. Certainly a created spirit would be neither good nor wise if it chose to isolate itself in its interior life, without thinking of others and without loving them. In loving them it adds to its perfection. There can be no increase in God's perfection. Of itself it is infinite, the plenitude of being. All created perfections pre-exist in an eminent mode in it, in a light incomparably brighter than the obscure light that we have, in a life incomparably richer than our life associated as such with death. God, without creating, would none the less in His

[56] The Vatican Council declared that "God, *with absolute freedom of counsel*, created the creature . . . *by His will free from all necessity*." Denzinger, 1783, 1805. See also one of Rosmini's condemned propositions. Denzinger, 1908.

interior life be infinitely good and infinitely wise. It is not necessary for Him to love and create us. It is only fitting for Him to do so.

However, someone may say, this creative love is a perfection in God. How, then, could this perfection be wanting in Him? To this Cajetan replies that it is a *free perfection, all the more perfect as it is the more free, and the absence of it would not be an imperfection.*[57] A free gift is the more precious according as it is more gratuitous and might as well not have been given. It demands the more gratitude in proportion as it is less due. Absolute optimism, which seeks to bind God to do always what is better, is oblivious of the fact that God's love for us is gratuitous.

Godoy[58] says that Cajetan's answer must be understood as referring to a free perfection, to one which may be wanting, not inasmuch as it is a perfection, but by reason of the object wished. Also Thomists in general prefer to say that the *free act of God is not an additional perfection for Him. It presupposes only the perfection of pure Act,* and is only extrinsically defectible by reason of the object willed.

In fact, divine liberty is not the predominating indifference of a power or faculty. It is the *predominating indifference of pure Act* with regard to everything created. Thus we see that God's free act is not an accidental and contingent action which is superadded to the act by which He necessarily loves Himself. In God it is but one and the same act of love by which He necessarily delights in the divine goodness and maintains a predominating indifference with regard to everything created, calling or not calling them into being according to His good pleasure (Ia, q. 19, a. 3, 4; *Contra Gentes,* Bk I, ch. lxxxii).

We shall have to return to this subject in the solution of the

[57] Cajetan, Commentary on the *Summa* (Ia, q. 19, a. 2).

[58] Godoy, O.P., Commentary on the *Summa* (Ia. q. 19, d. 48, secs. 4, 5, n. 85). All theologians admit that the real expediency of creation is such that it would not have been inexpedient for God not to create.

antinomies with regard to liberty (ch. iv, nn. 62, 63). If it were not for the fact that reason is liable to be misled, this latter apart from faith would suffice to tell us that the cause is such as has been stated. But revelation supplies what reason could never ascertain. In God there is a supreme and necessary outpouring of Himself. It is the impenetrable mystery of His intimate life and of His interior fecundity by which He communicates His whole nature, without either division or multiplicity of it, to His consubstantial Son, and together with His Son to the Spirit of love who unites them. (See *infra,* n. 53.)

God necessarily loves Himself. The Father necessarily begets the Son. The Father and the Son necessarily "spirate" the One who is Love (Ia, q. 41, a. 2). But it is in a free manner that God loves us, creates us, preserves us, moves us, and draws us to Himself. We are not a necessary emanation from the divine nature. The supreme Good does not communicate Himself outwardly by a sort of internal necessity, after the manner of the sun which illumines things. His loving goodness is absolutely free. He utters His fiat as He wills, according to His good pleasure. "Be light made. And light was made" (Gen. 1:3).

Creation is therefore an absolutely free act, and the natural gifts we have received are, in this sense, gratuitous. But there is in God a still freer act of love. We are in possession of more gratuitous gifts which are in no way demanded by the primary natural gifts. In a sense God has gone to the limits of love. He has willed to associate us with His intimate life, to draw us into a participation of His nature, and the indwelling of this love in our souls has produced grace in them, making us lovable in His sight, not only as His creatures but as His children. This quality disposes us to see Him and to enjoy Him for all eternity (Ia IIae, q. 110).

Such essentially is God's love for His creatures; for it is not only His creative action that He loves, but created beings are also the object of His love.

What are the properties of this love? This love of God is universal, extending to all creatures (Ia, q. 20, a. 2). It has, however, its free preferences (*ibid.*, a. 3). Yet these preferences in no way affect the wonderful order observed by charity (a. 4). Finally, God's love is invincible, and without His permission nothing can resist it; finally all things by His power conspire for good (Ia, q. 19, a. 6).

This love is universal and includes the most insignificant of creatures. God loves them, as a husbandman loves his fields, his house, his implements of labor, the animals which are for his use. In a higher order, God's love embraces all human beings, and He gives them sufficient help for their salvation.[59] God per-

[59] Says St. Paul: "God wishes all men to be saved" (I Tim. 2: 4). How is it that God's will is not fulfilled for all human beings? St. Thomas explains this (Ia. q. 19, a. 6 ad 1um) by distinguishing, with St. John Damascene, between the antecedent and consequent will in God. "Everything," he says, "in so far as it is good, is willed by God. A thing, taken in its primary sense, and absolutely considered, may be good or evil, and yet when some additional circumstances are taken into account, by a consequent consideration may be changed into the contrary. Thus, that a man should live is good; and that a man should be killed is evil, absolutely considered. But if in a particular case we add that a man is a murderer or dangerous to society, to kill him is a good; that he live is an evil. Hence it may be said of a just judge, that antecedently he wills all men to live, but consequently wills the murderer to be hanged. We may say the same of God. Antecedently God wills all men to be saved, but consequently wills some to be damned, as His justice exacts.

"Nor do we will simply what we will antecedently, but rather we will it in a qualified manner; for the will is directed to things, as they are in themselves, and in themselves they exist under particular qualifications. Hence we will a thing simply inasmuch as we will it when all particular circumstances are considered; and this is what is meant by willing consequently. Thus it may be said that a just judge wills simply the hanging of a murderer, but in a qualified manner he would will him to live, to wit, inasmuch as he is a man. Such a qualified will may be called a willingness rather than an absolute will. Thus it is clear that whatever God simply wills takes place; although what He wills antecedently may not take place."

Therefore, according to St. Thomas, the antecedent will wishes a thing as it is in itself, according to its nature, abstraction having been made of the circumstances which accompany it. Thus God wishes all men to be saved. On the other hand, the consequent will wishes the object together with all the circumstances. Thus the merchant in the midst of a storm wills to throw his merchandise into the sea. Likewise, it is God's will to condemn the sinner who appears before Him,

mits that man, liable by his nature to fail, may at times fail; and in consequence of this, certain persons lose their souls.[60] Though hating sin, God seeks the conversion of the sinner, as a sinner's soul is the object of divine love. Moreover, this love extends to the spiritual nature of the devil, for that nature is the result of divine love, and still contributes in a certain way to the perfection of the universe and the glory of the Creator (Ia, q. 20, a. 2; IIa IIae, q. 25, a. 11).

However, this universal love has its *free preferences*. True, God grants to all the necessary and sufficient graces to be saved. Yet for certain ones He manifests His predilection by giving them special graces. Why is it that this particular person is better than a certain other? Is it not, in the final analysis, because this person has received more, and by grace has gained more merit? "What have we that we have not received?" asks St. Paul (I Cor. 4:7). "For it is God," he says, "who worketh in us both to will and to accomplish according to his good will" (Phil. 2:13). A soul has received more graces because it has been the object of greater love. And if we ask why it has been loved more, the only answer is that it is God's good pleasure, His free preference being the only reason. Does not the singer reach higher notes, when

having committed many crimes. The Molinists differ from St. Thomas in their mode of defining antecedent will (that which precedes God's foreknowledge of our consent) and consequent will (that which follows His foreknowledge). Viewed in this way, God could no more be said to will the salvation of His elect than that of others. Man would decide for himself. God could no longer say to His saints: "I have chosen you." The nobler part in the work of salvation, the good act of the consent of the will, would come solely from ourselves and not from God. On the contrary, St. Paul says: "What hast thou that thou hast not received?" (I Cor. 4: 7.)

The consequent will *to punish* undoubtedly presupposes in God the foreknowledge of sin, because punishment cannot be inflicted except for a fault. But the consequent will either to justify a sinner or to give one the grace of final perseverance, does not presuppose a foreknowledge of one's merits (Ia, q. 23, a. 5).

[60] See nn. 64, 65: Human freedom and God's universal causality. Moral evil and God's universal causality (sufficient grace; sin).

and as it pleases him to do so? (Ia, q. 20, a. 3; q. 23, a. 5 ad 3um).

This sovereign freedom in its free preferences always preserves *the admirable order of charity*. "God loves more the better things," says St. Thomas, "and the reason why some things are better than others, is that God wills for them a greater good" (Ia, q. 20, a. 4). God prefers spiritual to corporeal beings; the latter have been created for the former. He prefers the Mother of the Word incarnate to all souls and all pure spirits created by Him. He prefers His only Son to the Blessed Virgin. It is true that Christ was sacrificed for us; it does not follow that God loves Him less than us, but it was done that by this Christ may become the glorious conqueror of the devil, sin, and death. God in His love subordinates everything to the glory of His elect and of Christ His Son, and ultimately to His own glory which is the manifestation of His infinite goodness. "All things are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's" (I Cor. 3:22, 23).

The order of love has as its principle and end *the glory of God*. It is for His glory that God loves us, creates us, preserves us, draws us to Himself. This is the express teaching of Scripture and of the Church.[61]

Philosophers such as Kant, Arhens, Guenther, and Hermes, have erred to such an extent as to see in this Catholic doctrine the glorification of what they call divine egoism. To avoid this so-called egoism, they declare that man was created for himself, and not for God. According to this, the rights of God would cease to be the foundation even of our religious obligations toward Him, since these obligations would have no other basis than our personal dignity and our natural tendency for happiness. These

[61] Vatican Council (Denzinger, 1805): "If anyone shall deny that the world was made for the glory of God: let him be anathema." The Council expresses the motive of the creative act when it says that it was: "not for the increase or acquirement of His own happiness, but to manifest His perfection by the blessings which He bestows on creatures." Denzinger, 1783.

philosophers also say that if God loves us and creates us for His glory, then He loves us as things which He makes use of and not as His children and friends.

As a matter of fact, God does not love us as something which He makes use of, for He wishes our good. More than this, He gives us the same good which constitutes His beatitude. But, for our greater honor, He subordinates to His own glory all that it pleases Him to grant us. It is far more glorious for us to have been created for the glory of Him who is, than to have been created for ourselves. Thus we can exceed the limitations of our nature and glorify Him who is the source of all good. It is our greatest honor to say with the Psalmist: "Not to us, O Lord, not to us: but to thy name give glory" (Ps. 113). If the sun's ray were aware of its brilliance, would it rejoice more in this than in the splendor of the source from which it comes?

To speak of divine egoism is to forget that the supreme Good is identified with God. In ordaining all things to Himself, it is for our greater happiness that He subordinates us to the supreme Good. If He were not to ordain us for Himself, it would be both "a disorder and a barbarity."[62] It would be a disorder, for the final end of the creative act would no longer be God Himself, but the creature. God in creating us would cease to love the supreme Good above all things. He would be preferring a finite good to Himself, just as the miser prefers his gold to his honor. It would be tantamount to a mortal sin in God or the extreme in absurdities.

This disorder would also be a barbarity. We should remain fatally prisoners of ourselves and could never aspire to our destined end, which is to know God and to praise Him, at the same time as loving Him. God's glory consists in being known and praised (Ia IIae, q. 2, a. 3).

[62] Monsabré, Lent, 1874, Conference on God, the Beginning and End of All Things, p. 291.

God's love for us remains a love of beneficence and friendship. It is a friendship all the more generous as we are the more destitute and in no way can be said to deserve it. Such is the love of saints for the lepers. What egotism is there in this? It is benevolence of love in the highest degree, absolutely gratuitous, coming from the greatest wealth to extreme poverty.

The final perfection of God's love consists in this, that its *power is invincible,* that nothing can resist it without God's permission. Finally, by God's power everything contributes to good (Ia, q. 19, a. 6).

God's love is invincible because He is the Creator, the principle of being and of action for all creatures. There are no effects except by His causality. Sin itself, however grievous it may be, comes from God, not in so far as it is a deordination, but considered in its entity and physical force. The sinner turns against God the very gifts which he receives from Him, which is like the action of a drowning man who would insult the one who had saved his life. God's love still preserves in being the soul of the sinner at the very moment when He could annihilate it by a complete cessation of His love for it.

God's love is invincible not only because it is creative, but because it is the principle of omnipotent grace by which the will and the heart are drawn to Him. We see this in the case of the saints. "The ardor of this love," as stated in the Canticle of Canticles (8:6), "is a burning desire, a flame from Jehovah." "Who then shall separate us from the love of Christ?" St. Paul asks. "Shall tribulation? or distress? or famine? . . . But in all these things we overcome, because of Him that hath loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, . . . nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:35–38). There is nothing that can triumph over God's love for us. But does not evil, especially sin, which is the death of the soul, resist love,

does it not despise God's love? In truth there is never any evil unless God permits it, and "His only reason for permitting it," says St. Augustine (*Enchiridion,* ch. xi), "is because He is powerful enough and good enough to bring good out of the very evil." Says the Canticle of Canticles (8:6): "Love is strong as death." It is stronger than natural death, and will raise us up at the last day to be admitted body and soul to share in God's intimate life. "O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?" (I Cor. 15:55.)

Divine love is stronger than spiritual death. Souls that are dead it raises to life not once but again and again in the course of a life on earth. And if it permits pride to abuse the goodness of grace, even the obstinacy of this pride must result ultimately in the glorification of Love which ever remains the stronger. By reason of the eternal punishment it deserves, obstinate pride proclaims again the inalienable rights of the sovereign Good to be loved above all things. Hell cries out these rights of God, and the flames which torment the damned are but a faint reflection of this ever ardent flame, which is at the same time the eternal love of the Good and a holy hatred of evil. It was from the midst of the burning bush that Moses was addressed by Him who is. This love is a spiritual fire which is never consumed and which the elect contemplate throughout eternity.

This love appeared on earth in the person of Jesus Christ. The most perfect attestation of this love is the sacrifice on the Cross. And we find this love revealed to us in the open heart of the Crucified, the *"fornax ardens charitatis:* the burning furnace of charity."

51) *God's justice and mercy.*

We have been discussing the divine will. Its two great virtues are justice and mercy. They seem to be contrary virtues, but in reality they are reconciled in divine love, and are subordinated to

each other in such a way that the gentleness of mercy offsets the rigor of justice.

We will treat first of justice, and after that we shall see why and how it is that mercy, as St. Thomas teaches, is superior to justice.

Justice. Justice is one of the first of moral notions conceived by the mind. In the broad sense of the term, justice implies the possession of all the virtues. In this sense we say of a man that he is just. In the strict sense of the term, justice is a special virtue which inclines the will to render to each one what is due.

We realize the worth of justice particularly from the pain we experience from injustice. And here on this earth we come across injustice at every turn. Moreover, of all rights, the noblest ones are those most misunderstood and most violated. Such are, for instance, the right we have to our reputation, freedom of action in doing good, in rendering to God the honor due to Him, the right of devoting our life to the salvation of souls. The propagation of vice and error is often admitted as a right. No less often people refuse to see that truth and virtue, inasmuch as they are of a far higher order, have this same right. Sometimes the wicked person is victorious, whereas a poor person, who would rather die than commit a base act, does not succeed in having his most natural rights recognized.

For the one who does not raise his heart to God, the injustice in the world is a disturbing element. And if this injustice, after falling drop by drop, pours down in torrents, as the psalmist expresses it, then this disturbing element may distress a soul to its very depths. Then something mysterious happens: "A man subjected to unjust treatment may wish to have others undergo the same experience, or the remembrance of this unjust treatment may excite in him a hunger and thirst for justice." [63] "Blessed are

[63] Hello, *Paroles de Dieu:* "The torrents of iniquity troubled me" (Ps. 17).

they that hunger and thirst after justice: for they shall have their fill" (Matt. 5:6).

Where shall we find this perfect justice? Scripture is constantly repeating to us that God is just, that His judgment is always right, and that all things will positively find their readjustment in the order of justice and of love. "Thou art just, O Lord: and Thy judgment is right" (Ps. 118:137).

But here a voice, which is not that of the Gospel, bids us halt at times, seeking to prevent us from raising our minds to God. It made itself heard in more or less vague terms at the time when Jansenism was rampant, and it strikes quite a different tone in contemporary naturalism. By artful suggestion this voice would have us believe that between ourselves and God there are no possible relations of justice.

It is only between equals who can mutually exchange what is their own, so they say, that there can be any justice. But we cannot offer God anything which does not already belong to Him. We owe everything to Him, and He owes us nothing. He cannot treat us as equals. He governs all things according to His good pleasure, and need not account to us for anything.

Is justice to be found in the distribution of good things, of graces, in the assignment of rewards and punishments? In a just distribution of good things and of graces would there still be those unequal conditions between persons, both in the supernatural and the natural order? Some are rich, others are poor. Some are richly endowed with the gifts of nature, others are less fortunate in this respect, having poor health and a melancholy temperament. Some are constantly in the environment of graces and good example, others are in the midst of temptations and scandals.

Some laborers come at the last hour, being converted only at the end of their lives, and others have labored all life long. Would it be distributive justice to reward each of these equally?

Finally, a just punishment must be proportioned to the offence. A mortal sin is committed in a moment of time. How can it be deserving of eternal punishment? Anger, which is a passion, cannot exist in God. And if an inexorable justice still deserves to be called justice, how can it be reconciled with infinite mercy? Thus speaks the naturalism of the present day, refusing to see in divine justice anything but an illusory symbol created by religious sentiment.

The words of Holy Writ still remain true: "Thou art just, O Lord, and Thy judgment is right" (Ps. 118:137). The Lord is just, and "all His ways are mercy and truth" (Ps. 24:10). But to have a proper understanding of God's word, we must discern aright what differentiates human from divine justice.

St. Thomas (Ia, q. 21, a. 1) teaches that between God and us there can be no question of that kind of justice which directs the exchanges made between individuals and which is called *commutative justice*. It is found only between equals who can exchange what is their own. We cannot offer God anything that does not already belong to Him. We owe everything to Him. What have we that we have not received? It is only because God gives us His grace that our acts are meritorious, otherwise there would be no such thing. "For it is God who worketh in you, both to will and to accomplish," says St. Paul (Phil. 2:13). He does so without taking away our freedom of will. The act of willing is not to be attributed entirely to ourselves, for the grace of God works with us: "Yet not I, but the grace of God with me" (I Cor. 15:10).

Thus God can receive nothing from us which does not already belong to Him. When He rewards our meritorious acts, they are His own gifts, says St. Augustine, that He is crowning.

It is true that between God and us there can be no question of commutative justice, which is the basis of the exchanges made between individuals; but there most certainly is a distributive

justice, which is infinitely superior to that found here on earth among human beings, and which regulates the distribution of good things, of rewards, and of punishments. God is just, not merely as a king is toward his subjects, but as a father is toward his children, and He is infinitely more just than the best of fathers on earth.

Let us consider this divine justice in the distribution of natural goods and graces; in the distribution of rewards; in the punishments inflicted by God upon the guilty.

1) The distribution of natural goods and of graces is perfectly just, notwithstanding the inequality of the natural and supernatural conditions accompanying it. God's end in view in this distribution is to establish universal harmony among all creatures, without depriving any kind or any soul of what it needs to attain its end.

This universal harmony in created things proclaiming God's glory is the end He has in view. As St. Thomas explains it (Ia, q. 47, a. 2), this harmony necessarily demands that it be such as to constitute a hierarchy and consequently that there be inequality between created things. Highest of all are the pure spirits called angels, and lower in the scale come inanimate beings. If there were only angels in existence, this would detract from the perfection prevailing in creation. What would an animal be like if each of its organs had the perfection belonging to the eye? What would be a tree be like if all its parts were flowers? That creation may be a glorious manifestation of the divine perfections, it is fitting that after the angels comes man, and after man the irrational animals, plants, and stones. So the harmony of the universe demands this hierarchy. But each creature receives from God what is necessary for it to attain its end. The herbivorous animal finds the grass it needs, the carnivorous animal finds the prey it needs for sustenance. The just God gives to each its food: "Behold the birds of the air, for they neither sow, nor do they reap; and

your heavenly Father feedeth them" (Matt. 6:26). God distributes proportionately to created beings what is in keeping with their nature.

It is the same with the human race. The harmony and the hierarchy which call for a generally prevailing inequality among creatures, also call for a certain accidental inequality among men. First of all, there is inequality of condition, from the natural point of view. By his nature, man must live a social life; and society as an organism presupposes a hierarchy of duties to be performed, of superiors and of inferiors. Human society would not be a completely organized body if each of its members were king or lawmaker. What would our body be like if each of our members had the perfection of the head? This is what makes St. Thomas say (Ia, q. 96, a. 3, 4), that even in the state of innocence there would have been a certain inequality among human beings, and that society would have required that there be superiors and inferiors. "So that the beauty of order would the more shine forth among men." Selfishness has exaggerated the inequality of the conditions but has not created it.

Taken as a whole, the harmony between things not only demands certain inequality among men, but also requires a certain inequality in the distribution of graces. To one person our heavenly Father gives one talent, to another He gives two, and to a certain other He gives five. This one will be the founder of a religious order, that one will be a humble lay brother, and a certain other person will live a Christian life in the world. St. Paul tells us that the mystical body, consisting of souls united with Christ, is a spiritual organism, and every organism presupposes diversity and a certain inequality in the functions of the organism.

Although among men the conditions and graces are unequal, still no one is deprived of the graces necessary and sufficient for the attainment of his end, which is the salvation of his soul. As

we find things in nature, the just God provides for irrational beings. How much the more does He provide for the needs of man and especially for the needs of the soul. "Behold the birds of the air, for they neither sow, nor do they reap . . . and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not you of much more value than they? . . . Be not solicitous therefore saying, what shall we eat: or what shall we drink? . . . For after all these things do the heathens seek. For your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things. Seek ye therefore first the kingdom of God and His justice: and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6: 26–31). Each soul is an object of God's special concern, for each soul, as St. Thomas says, is equivalent in value to any species or world, for each soul is truly immortal. God may permit, indeed, that in the animal kingdom some poor beast is no longer able to find the means necessary for its sustenance; but He cannot let a soul, except through its own fault, be without the help needed to escape damnation.

All persons, even those who have not had the Gospel preached to them, receive graces sufficient for them to save their souls. Certainly they are helped far less than those born in the Catholic Church, but they receive help sufficient for salvation.[64] If they correspond to the graces received, if they act according to the dictates of conscience, as they are prompted to do by actual grace, then by a series of graces and by constant fidelity to inspirations, they finally receive the light of faith and acquire that life of charity, by means known to God, even if He has to send an angel or a preacher of the faith to them, as He sent the Apostle St. Peter to Cornelius the centurion (Acts, ch. x).[65]

[64] See n. 65.

[65] See St. Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 14, a. 14 ad 1um and 2um. Pius IX (allocution, *Singulari quadam*, December 9, 1854) says: "Of a certainty it is to be held as of faith, that outside the Roman Apostolic Church no one can be saved: that it is the only ark of salvation and that anyone not having entered therein will perish

Grace is not given in proportion to one's natural qualities; natural good works do not merit grace, for it is of a higher order. The Pelagians and the Semi-Pelagians were condemned for not admitting this truth. But to the man who with the help of actual grace does what he can, God does not refuse habitual or sanctifying grace, by which he is justified. *"Facienti quod in se est, Deus non denegat gratiam:* God does not refuse His grace to him who does his best" (Ia IIae, q. 109, a. 6 ad 2um).

In spite of the inequality of conditions and of graces, the distribution of good things in both the natural and the supernatural order still remains a just one. Some have received merely one talent, but they have received it. God demands of them only that they make their talent productive.

2) God's justice is no less clearly illustrated in the distribution of rewards. Reward is proportioned to merit; and the degree of glory, to the degree of charity. The distribution of rewards and punishments commands our admiration. For the performance of good deeds that are purely of the natural order God gives a temporal reward; for supernaturally good deeds, a supernatural reward.

With regard to those who give alms solely that they may be seen by men, our Lord says: "Amen I say to you, they have received their reward," the praise of men. "And when thou dost alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth; that thy alms may be in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret

as those did in the time of the flood. But, for all that, it is likewise to be held as certain, that those who do not know which religion is the true one, if the ignorance be invincible, these in the eyes of the Lord are not guilty of any grievous sin. But now, if we consider the various kinds of people, the countries in which they live, their individual dispositions and so many other things, who is there who will go so far as to say that he can set a limit to this kind of ignorance? For when, freed from the trammels of this body of ours, we shall see God as He is, we shall undoubtedly understand how the mercy and justice of God are united in a close and beautiful embrace." Denzinger, n. 1647; also n. 1677.

will repay thee," with an eternal reward, the glory not being that which comes from men but that which comes from God (Matt. 6:2–4).

In this supernatural order, there is a proportion between the supernatural reward and the supernatural merits; and the degree of merit is according to the degree of charity with which the act is performed. This is the teaching conveyed to us in the parable of the talents (Matt. 25:14). To the one who received five talents and gained another five, it was said: "Enter thou into the joy of Thy Lord." He receives as reward a measure of the Master's own happiness. To the one who received two talents and gained other two, the same is said. He receives the same kind of reward but in a lesser degree. He who received but one talent and let it remain unproductive, hears himself condemned in the following words: "Take ye away therefore the talent from him and give it to him that hath ten talents. For to everyone that hath [a good will], shall be given, and he shall abound. But from him that hath not [a good will] that also which he seemeth to have shall be taken away" (Matt. 25: 20–23, 28, 29).

The laborers who came at the last hour had not worked, it is true, so long as the others; how is it, then, that they receive the same reward? (Matt. 20:12.) The value of a meritorious act is not always measured by the time taken to perform it. The laborers who came at the last hour, who were the object of the master's special benevolence in that he deigned yet to call them, showed themselves no doubt particularly grateful. They worked more willingly, just as Magdalen in one moment loved so much. These laborers were able to gain as much merit in one hour as the others acquired by working all day. The householder was free to have mercy on them and still call them at the last moment. But he did not defraud the others, for he gave them in justice what was due them.

According to good deeds performed, each one is rewarded

either with eternal life or with grace. Supernatural gifts are not in proportion to natural gifts. The Lord is pleased to bestow upon the poor and the humble an abundance of graces, unknown to the people of the world. The degree of glory will be in proportion to the degree of charity or of merit that we have at the hour of death.

Here on earth, if we are faithful, we receive the hundredfold. Here on earth is realized the parable of the wise virgins. Those who have managed to keep their lamps supplied with the oil of charity are called by the spouse. They are admitted to the intimacy of spiritual union, which is a foretaste of that experienced in heaven.

God's justice which thus gives each one his reward urges the just one to hope with St. Paul. "I have fought a good fight: I have finished my course. . . . As to the rest, there is laid up for me a crown of justice which the Lord the just judge will render to me in that day: and not only to me, but to them also that love His coming" (II Tim. 4: 8).

3) Finally, we shall clearly see God's justice in the punishments which He inflicts upon the guilty. Punishment is according to the offence, as reward is according to merit.

First of all, it is proper that God should punish, so that there may be a restoration of the divine order when it has been violated. Remorse of conscience, says St. Thomas, because we have disturbed the order in things dictated by reason, punishes us. A magistrate, being the custodian of the social order, must punish those who upset this order. Thus God, the just judge, punishes those who rebel against the divine order. The human will in violating all three orders incurs a threefold punishment, since it is subjected to these three orders (IIa IIae, q. 87, a. 1). God punishes dispassionately, just as a judge who is completely master of himself, without being angry, condemns a criminal, his purpose being to uphold those very principles by which society is governed.

For a proper understanding of vindictive justice in God, how it is a *virtue,* and an *absolute perfection,* we must point out that God does not hate the sinner, but "He has an infinite hatred of sin, because it is an obstacle preventing Him from establishing that union with us which He so ardently desires, as also because it is directly opposed to His divine perfections. Being Himself infinite goodness, light of absolute purity, untarnished beauty, God cannot refrain from hating and detesting sin above all things, since it is but darkness, malice, and corruption. This hatred is so intense that in all God's operations as recorded in both the Old and the New Testament, especially His ardent attachment to His well-beloved Son, He has had in view only the destruction of sin. On this point, the most enlightened of God's servants assure us that, to blot out the least trace of sin from the soul, the Savior would be ready to suffer a thousand deaths."

Christian feeling is thus expressed in a book which the faithful love and which they all understand. Thus vindictive justice appears, as it were, to be a phase of God's love. However rigorous and inexorable its attitude may be toward the obduracy of sin, why should it be impossible of reconciliation with the sweetness and mercy of God?

After Jesus Christ, is not the Blessed Virgin the most perfect personification of humility, sweetness, and mercy? Nevertheless, she is also called the *"Mirror of Justice,"* because she detests evil as vehemently as she loves good. "You that love the Lord, hate evil" (Ps. 96: 10).

A famous Catholic author writes as follows: "Judith is one of the least known types of Mary. . . . In her the Blessed Virgin is revealed to us in one of her most unfamiliar aspects. The woman is represented to us in a forgotten aspect, that of horror. Where the feeling of horror is absent, there is neither love nor light. . . . Without doubt, the Blessed Virgin had at heart a holy and vehement horror of evil which is like a forgotten lamp left burn-

ing in the recesses of a sanctuary, and the discovery of this hatred will be, perhaps, one of the astonishments of eternity.

"Many booklets and little pictorial representations have attributed an insipid sweetness to the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is a silly kind of sweetness which does not seem to have deep down within itself the capacity of being horrified, which is that saintly faculty of holding certain things in detestation. This detestation of evil is the rarest of virtues and the most forgotten of glories. But the Blessed Virgin was not unmindful of God's words: . . . 'I will put enmities between thee and the woman. She shall crush thy head' (Gen. 3: 15).

"It is difficult for us to know to what low level this sentiment of holiness has sunk in many men, because they look upon it as something soft, feeble, deprived as it is of that terrible energy inspired by detestation. Now, if hatred of evil has been the experience of all the saints, if not one of them has been without this light,[66] how brilliant this light must have been in Mary. . . . Judith is the answer of Scripture to the forgetfulness of men who see in holiness the effacement of personality and the foolishness of accepting all things without hating their contraries." [67]

Later on, St. John the apostle of love becomes also the prophet of God's vindictive justice. How can we fail to see in this virtue an absolute perfection? It is so closely associated with God's love of His own goodness as to be nothing else but the proclamation of His rights to be loved above all things. Therefore it is proper for God to punish creatures for violating the divine order. The punishment He inflicts is always proportioned to the offence. When we come to treat of God's mercy, we will even go so far as to say that the punishment is always less than the offence.

Venial sin receives a temporal punishment. In the case of a

[66] The holy hatred of evil, whatever one may say, is truly a necessary light for a judgment to be impartial. For a profound knowledge of good, we must love it. For a real knowledge of evil, we must hate it.

[67] Hello, *Paroles de Dieu,* Part II.

person dying impenitent in a state of mortal sin, the punishment is eternal. This is a dogma of our faith.

An irreligious person may object: How can eternal punishment be proportioned to an offence committed in a few moments? Says Hello: "Satan has always sought to move people to commiserate the damned. He whose malice is unspeakable, wishes to pass himself off here as being good. He presents the damned to us as unfortunate beings asking to be forgiven and unable to obtain forgiveness. He would have us bewail their misfortune and his own. Men, deceived by Satan's false appeal to charity, have pity on him. He whispers gently to his friends, making himself as sweet as sugar and honey. He even mentions his mercy and accuses God of cruelty." He is thus portrayed in Vigny's *Eloa*. What proportion is there between an instantaneous offence and a punishment which is eternal?

Time is not here the question of paramount importance. The laborers who came at the last hour worked but a short time, nevertheless they received the reward of eternal life. According to the ways of God's judgment, as also those of human justice, punishment is proportioned to the gravity of the offence, and not to the time required for committing it. It takes but a moment to kill someone; does it follow that the murderer deserves to be punished only for a moment? On the contrary, he is deserving either of hard labor for life or of the death penalty. The murderer is cut off forever from association with his fellow-beings. In a certain way, it is like the eternity of punishment which God inflicts.

We must also draw attention to the fact that there is even a proportion as to time, between eternal punishment and unrepented mortal sin, because this sin always remains. What we must not fail to notice is that mortal sin is truly moral suicide, depriving a soul of divine life. The sinner, in deliberately turn-

ing away from God and preferring a wretched created good, makes his final end consist in this created good. He deprives his soul of spiritual life and effects a sort of *irreparable* disturbance of the divine order within it. Thus blindness becomes an incurable malady when the principle of sight is destroyed, and for this a moment of time suffices. Mortal sin, once committed, persists therefore as an incurable blindness and thus deserves unending punishment. So long as the disorder lasts, so long also does the punishment last. "For this reason alone," says St. Gregory, "that the sinner makes his final end to consist in created good which he prefers to God, he has the will to sin forever and thus deserves to be punished forever." [68]

A damned soul does not beg forgiveness, and its punishment is eternal, because its hatred is eternal. If it could leave hell, it would prefer to return there rather than go to heaven, for it finds in hell full scope for its fury. Here on earth certain persons prefer a hovel to a palace, and the atmosphere of a prison to that of a church. No longer can a damned soul be the object of pity or of mercy, and it no longer has the least wish to repent. Yet divine mercy alleviates its sufferings; they would be far greater if they were determined solely by God's justice.[69]

Such is this terrifying attribute of God, which manifests itself only when mercy has been frequently despised. How many times does the merciful God reach out to the sinner, rescue him from the precipice where he has fallen, and give him spiritual life again. He pardons seventy times seven times, which means always; and He chastises by means of medicinal punishments, that are intended to induce the guilty one to repent.

If, however, in spite of the graces offered, a sinner spurns divine love desirous of saving him, God allows him to be surprised by

[68] *Dialogues,* Bk. IV, ch. xliv. See also St. Thomas, Ia IIae, q. 87, a. 3 ad 1um.
[69] Cf. Ia, q. 21, a. 4 ad 1um.

death, which leaves him merely time enough for a final decision.[70] If he is obdurate, the punishment, like the offence, is eternal. As in this life a murderer is punished by exclusion from association with his fellow-men, so divine love which has been spurned, becomes implacable. Free from anger, it proclaims the inalienable rights of the sovereign Good to be loved above all things.

If we are able to observe about us the manifestations of divine justice, we shall have a clear insight into the harmony of the divine operations. If the most beloved have received the more, they should know how to suffer and atone for others, even to the extent of being a victim for them. The rigors of divine justice are here wonderfully reconciled with the most generous and benign justice of God.

The most beloved of all, beloved more than all human and angelic creatures combined, is Jesus Christ. It is He who offered Himself as victim for us, who was stricken for our sake, since we are too weak to pay our own debt. For one moment divine justice was for the heart of Jesus as hard as hell: "love is as strong as death, jealousy as hard as hell" (Cant. 8:6). This moment was when the divine curse[71] fell upon Christ laden with our sins, so that it elicited from His heart the most heroic act of love for His Father and for us. It was an act of love which reconciled in that afflicted heart the supreme demands of justice with the highest manifestation of tenderest mercy. "Mercy and truth have met each other: justice and peace have kissed" (Ps. 84:11). A most heartfelt suffering was the price of this reconciliation. "For God so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son" (John 3:16).

Such is the law of the supernatural world, and we see the

[70] Cajetan, on Ia, q. 64, a. 2, n. 18.

[71] "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us (for it is written: cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree)." Gal. 3:13. St. Thomas explains this passage as follows: "Inasmuch as He took upon Himself the curse of sin, by dying for us, He is said to have become for us a curse."

application of it in the lives of Jesus, the Blessed Virgin, and the saints. Souls the most loved are also those who in this life must suffer the most. For their own salvation as well as that of others, they must share in the sufferings of Mary's heart. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall have their fill. . . . Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt., ch. v). The sufferings of this life endured from a supernatural motive will, as St. Paul says, be worth "an eternal weight of glory" (II Cor. 4: 17).

Divine Mercy. We said that God's justice is the virtue by means of which He gives to all creatures what is necessary for the attainment of their end. It is also that virtue by which He rewards and punishes. There is another virtue of the divine will which, in certain respects, seems to be contrary to divine justice. This virtue is God's infinite mercy, which the Scripture repeatedly praises: "The mercies of the Lord I will sing forever" (Ps. 88: 1).

The prophets often say, as Daniel does (3: 29–43): "Lord, we have sinned against Thee and we deserve the punishment which Thou dost inflict upon us; but give glory to Thy name, O Lord, and according to the abundance of Thy mercy deliver us." In the *Miserere,* David exclaims: "Lord I know my iniquity, and my sin is always before me. To Thee only have I sinned. Cast me not away from Thy face. Cleanse me and I shall be made clean. Wash me and I shall be made whiter than snow. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation and my mouth shall declare Thy praise. O God, a contrite and humble heart, Thou wilt not despise" (Ps. 50). In the psalms we find three expressions that are nearly always used together. They are the *misery* of man who appeals to the *divine mercy* for the *glory of God.* "Help us O God, our Savior, for the glory of Thy name, and forgive us our sins" (Ps. 78: 9). "Shew forth Thy wonderful mercies; Thou who savest them that trust in Thee" (Ps. 16: 7). In the *De profundis*

we find the same appeal: "Out of the depths I have cried to Thee, O Lord: hear my voice. If Thou wilt mark iniquities, who shall stand it? For with Thee there is merciful forgiveness. My soul hath hoped in the Lord, because with the Lord there is mercy and with Him *plentiful* redemption" (Ps. 129).

The Gospel represents God as a Father who loves us as His children, who pardons the prodigal son despite his ingratitude and his repeated offences. The special message for us in the glad tidings is that God is our Savior, the good Shepherd, who seeks the lost sheep and brings it back on His shoulders. The whole Gospel is a history of God's mercies to souls, however far they may have strayed from Him, as was the case with the Samaritan woman, with Magdalen, Zaccheus, the good thief, with all of us, for whom the Father delivered up His Son as a victim of expiation.

In spite of these striking manifestations of infinite mercy, modern unbelief, known as Agnosticism, comes forward with the objection that mercy, as attributed to God, is merely a symbol, a manner of speech, a metaphor entirely of the human order, as when we say that God is angry. And just as anger, which is a passion, cannot be attributed to God who is pure spirit, so also the same must be said of mercy, which would make Him grieve over the miseries of this life of ours. Sadness cannot be reconciled with infinite happiness. If there is absolute justice in God, it is opposed also to any feeling of compassion, which would be a weakness, a restriction of the inalienable rights of the Creator. God cannot belie Himself.

Finally, the unbeliever goes on to say that, if we look around us, the sight of so much physical and moral unrelieved wretchedness makes us think there is not any real foundation for the idea of infinite mercy, which is merely a beautiful dream, the result of religious sentiment.

On the contrary, from the teaching of the Church we see: (1)

that mercy is not a sadness and weakness in God, but a most glorious manifestation of His power and goodness; (2) that mercy, far from being a restriction upon justice, is allied with it, at the same time surpassing it. Let us explain this:

1) To see how mercy is a virtue and an absolute perfection, we must carefully distinguish it from that sensible feeling of pity, which God could not have. That sensible feeling of pity, as St. Thomas remarks (IIa IIae, q. 30, a. 1), is a special trait of the weak and timid, of those who are quick to realize they are threatened with some evil from which their neighbor is suffering. Thus they instinctively consider the sufferings of others as their own and feel compassion for them. The happy and powerful, on the contrary, have not much of this sensible feeling of pity in them.

How can God, who is infinitely happy and free from all sufferings, have compassion for us in our miseries? Let us not seek to find in Him a sensible feeling of pity, an emotion that would cause Him to suffer in the same way as we do concerning our miseries. There is nothing of the sensible order in God. He is pure spirit. There is no sadness in Him. He is sovereign Good. But the virtue of divine mercy does not consist in this pity which results from a consideration of some natural good, and which arises from the fear of some evil or from a feeling of sympathy. Mercy in God is a virtue of His benevolent and beneficent will; it does not arise from the fear of evil, but comes from His love of the supreme Good and from a generosity sufficiently strong and enduring to triumph over evil and wrest souls from the moral evil of sin. If it is a characteristic of the weak to be tender-hearted, a characteristic of the strong and the good, says St. Thomas, is to give generously, to let others share that wealth of life which they possess.[72] The more good there is in a being, the more generously

[72] St. Thomas (IIa IIae, q. 30, a. 4) says: "For it belongs to mercy to lavish this upon others, and what is more of importance, to be of help to others in their

and intimately it gives of itself. If, then, God is infinitely good, and if He is happiness itself, He cannot grieve over our miseries, but is naturally inclined to help us.

Moreover, there is something in this life which has an inevitable claim upon divine mercy. It is misery which, instead of becoming bitter, angry, and rebellious, turns toward God, imploring Him in absolute confidence, because He is Goodness, Happiness, Glory, and Omnipotence. And the greater is our misery and the more we realize our need of help, the more we feel that God can remedy the defect, the stronger also we become, and the more irresistible is the appeal made to God's omnipotent goodness. The more power and goodness there is in ■ being, the more it gives of itself. The weaker and poorer we are, the stronger is our appeal to the gift of God's supreme goodness. "For when I am weak, then am I powerful," declares St. Paul (II Cor. 12:10). Just before this the Lord had said to him: "Power is made perfect in infirmity." "Have mercy on me," says the Psalmist, "for I am weak" (Ps. 6). "Look Thou upon me, and have mercy on me; for I am alone and poor" (Ps. 24:16). It is the cry of the woman of Chanaan: "The whelps also eat of the crumbs which fall from the tables of their masters" (Matt. 15:27). You cannot despise her who is speaking to you, for she is really weak.

But far greater, beyond all comparison, is the appeal of misery, when it makes supplication to God not only to obtain help from Him, but also that the glory of God may be strikingly illustrated. It is the prayer of Daniel (3:42): "Put us not to confusion, but deal with us according to Thy meekness and according to the multitude of Thy mercies." "For the glory of Thy name, O Lord, deliver us," says the Psalmist (Ps. 78:9). A certain Christian of

failings. And this applies especially to a superior. Hence to be merciful is regarded as properly belonging to God. And most certainly it is said to be in this that His omnipotence is manifested."

great faith often prayed as follows: "Lord, remember that You created all things out of nothing; that by the touch of Your hand the stars were illumined. Since You are magnificent and immense, be such in giving to us. By the immensity of Your gifts cause my desires to be overwhelmingly satisfied. Make me say: God is great, and I knew it not. God is God, and I was asleep. Act according to the difference of our two natures, for You are Being and I am nothingness. Since You are God, give Yourself without reserve, so that I may recognize You. I am one who does not exist and has need of everything. God, everything is Yours; give everything to him who is nothing and has need of everything. You were not ungenerous when you sprinkled the heavens with the stars. Since You are God, be not invincible. Father, You who are pleased to yield though omnipotent, to come down from Your high abode, to be conquered though You are glorious, as You have created me out of nothing, so hearken to me, worthless as I am."

Such can be the sinner's prayer, incapable though he is of meriting, when asking for sanctifying grace which is the principle of all merit. The least degree of this grace is of more value than the sum-total of created things.[73] "May the abundance of Your gifts multiply my desires."

Who would say that mercy taken in this sense is an imperfection in God? It is a glorious manifestation of His power and goodness. In creating, God draws being out of nothing, but when He is merciful He does something incomparably more sublime, for He brings good out of evil. Out of evil, which is even less than nothing, God is pleased to bring an entirely supernatural good, one which is greater than all created things combined. This prompts St. Augustine and St. Thomas [74] to say that, to make of a

[73] See Ia IIae, q. 113, a. 9 ad 2um: "The good of grace in one is greater than the good of nature in the whole universe."

[74] See Ia IIae, q. 113, a. 9.

sinner a just man is a greater and more glorious act for God than to create heaven and earth. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but the grace given to a sinner seeks to increase in him and to remain with him forever. St. Thomas even goes on to say that although glory, which is the consummation of grace, is the greater of the two, yet the justification of a sinner is proportionately greater than the glorification of a just person; for the gift of grace exceeds the state of the ungodly more than the gift of glory exceeds the state of the just. God is pleased at times, purely of His goodness, to effect from the most grievous sin a more sincere repentance, so that the baser was the ingratitude, the greater should be the degree of charity.

As for the rest of us, the good that we can do is done only by means of good. It has been said that what belongs peculiarly to God is to bring good out of evil. In this we see the triumph of His glory. Therefore mercy is neither a sadness nor a weakness. Not only is it reconciled with God's supreme happiness and omnipotence, but it is the most striking manifestation thereof.

2) Why is it impossible for God's mercy to be reconciled with His infinite justice? On first consideration, it seems to be a weakening on the part of divine justice of inalienable rights which that justice cannot give up. God cannot be untrue to Himself. As a matter of fact, God's mercy, instead of restricting and opposing His justice, becomes one with it, at the same time surpassing it. "All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth," says the Psalmist (Ps. 24: 10); but "mercy exalteth above judgment," says the Apostle St. James (2: 13). According to St. Thomas, the reason for this is because "every work of divine justice presupposes a work of mercy or of entirely gratuitous goodness, and is founded thereon. If, indeed, there is something due to the creature from God, this must be on account of something that precedes. If He has to reward our meritorious acts, it is because He first of all gave us the grace so that we may merit; if it is due to Him to

give us the grace necessary for salvation, it is because it was He who, in the first place and purely of His goodness, created us and destined us for a life which is supernatural. Divine mercy is thus, as it were, the root or the principle of all God's works, these being permeated and dominated by this virtue. Viewed as the primary source of all God's gifts, it is His mercy which exerts the greatest influence, and that is why it surpasses His justice, this latter being only secondary and subordinate to it. God always gives out of the superabundance of His goodness more than justice demands, more than the nature and the condition of creatures demand" (Ia, q. 21, a. 4).

This is easily acounted for by considering the three great acts of justice, namely: to give what is necessary, to reward, and to punish. Mercy surpasses justice and becomes one with it even in the act of punishing.

a) The first act of divine justice is to give to creatures what is necessary for the attainment of their end. But divine mercy gives more than is necessary. "The earth is full of the mercy of the Lord" (Ps. 32:5).

God could have created us in a purely natural state and given us only an immortal soul. He has called us to participate supernaturally in His intimate life. He has given us grace which is the principle of our supernaturally meritorious acts. Justice does not lose its rights, but mercy prevails.

God could have left us in that state in which we were after the fall of our first parents. He could also have raised us up out of this state of sin by simply pardoning us. He has given us His only Son as victim for our redemption, and we can always appeal to the merits of the Savior. Justice does not lose its rights, but mercy prevails.

After the death of Christ, it was enough that our souls be kept alive and preserved from harm by means of interior graces. Divine mercy has given us the Holy Eucharist. On Pentecost and again

for each one of us in Confirmation, the Holy Spirit came to dwell in us. After our repeated falls into sin, we receive absolution every time we sincerely wish to return to God. The whole Christian religion is a history of the mercies of the Lord.

God gives us exceedingly more than our nature demands. He gives us supernatural life, and in this supernatural order exceedingly more than is strictly necessary to enable us to attain our end. Justice loses none of its rights, but mercy prevails. This mercy is so great that pride finds it overwhelming. Pride was the sin of the fallen angels and it is the deep-seated vice of Naturalism. This Naturalism refuses to be ennobled, to be elevated by grace to the supernatural life, to the intimate life of God, content to remain in the purely natural state, being indebted for this only to itself. It is the characteristic of pride that it does not wish to be under obligations for anything to anyone except itself, and that it seeks to rid itself of that immense debt of gratitude which every creature owes to God.[75] The astonishing thing is this, that it is not so much vindictive justice which strikes at pride; it is particularly infinite mercy that does so. In direct contrast to the greatest mystery of grace, there is the mystery of iniquity.

b) The second act of divine justice is to reward each one according to his merits. But divine mercy gives us more than we have merited. In this life, how many are the graces bestowed upon those who have fallen, beyond all their deserts, so that they may be promptly rescued from sin and spiritual death? While Paul

[75] See the definition of Naturalism given by St. Thomas in the article in which he considers the malice of sin in the angels. "It was in this way that the devil desired inordinately to be like to God, because he *desired as his last end of beatitude, something which he could attain by the virtue of his own nature*, turning his appetite away from supernatural beatitude, which is attained by God's grace" (Ia, q. 63, a. 3).

In our days the same is said by those who accept the doctrine of immanence. They refuse a supernatural which would be a purely gratuitous gift on the part of divine mercy. See *Dictionnaire apologétique de la foi catholique*, 4th ed., art. "Immanence," col. 585.

was persecuting the infant Church, he was suddenly filled with consternation through the intervention of divine mercy and was crushed beneath the weight of grace which he could in no way have deserved. After conversion, a great many helps are freely granted to souls, far beyond their deserts, so as to enable them to persevere in doing good and to grow in holiness. In the case of souls that have fallen again into sin, it often happens that they are converted a short time before their death, like the laborers who come at the last hour and yet receive the reward of eternal life. These souls performed some very simple act of charity, such as giving a glass of water to a poor person for the love of God, and divine mercy rewards them with an eternity of happiness.

c) The third act of justice consists in inflicting the penalty due to sin. Here again mercy prevails. "To punish in excess would be injustice; if, in this order, divine love wishes to exceed its strict right," says St. Thomas, "there is only one thing to be done, and that is, either to remit the punishment or pardon one. To *pardon* means *to give* in *excess;* to remit an offence is freely to bestow a gift" (Ia, q. 21, a. 3 ad 2um).

And how is the right to pardon in conflict with the right to punish? The former right does not restrict the latter, but surpasses it. The right to pardon is one of the noblest privileges of sovereigns, of those at the head of the state. He who is lawfully invested with power to punish can also remit the penalty. That is not possible for a mere judge whose duty is to see that the law is observed. But it is possible for the lawgiver and the supreme judge. In remitting the penalty no wrong is done to anyone. The right to pardon is therefore the noblest prerogative of the supreme Judge, one that especially manifests His glory and goodness (IIIa, q. 46, a. 2 ad 3um).

When a murderer, justly sentenced to death by the highest earthly authorities, has been unable to obtain his pardon from them, when he is justly condemned also by the authority of the

supreme Judge, recourse to Him is still possible. So long as the culprit is not confirmed in his evil ways, he can appeal from God's justice to God's glory. He can always offer up this prayer: Lord, I have sinned outrageously against Thee, and I deserve that the penalty of death be inflicted upon me by those who have received from Thee the authority to do so; but for the sake of Thy glory, O Lord, pardon me. As Thou hast created me out of nothing, graciously hear me, unworthy as I am. Grant that I may die in union with Thee and cause my shameful death to be like that of the good thief, a ray of glory for Thee. "Shew forth Thy wonderful mercies, O Lord, Thou who savest them that trust in Thee" (Ps. 16:7).

How many, regardless of self, think in this sincere way of God's glory? At times those do so who find it no longer possible to think of their own glory. This is the case with a dethroned king such as Louis XVI at the foot of the scaffold, or with great sinners who have absolutely no other recourse left to them except to trust in God's mercy. Sometimes God is pleased to make saints of them. History has preserved the name of Carino, St. Peter Martyr's assassin. Carino, suddenly enlightened by grace and in a spirit of repentance, asked to be clothed in the habit of a lay-brother. After forty years of penance, he died the death of a saint. God's mercy toward sinners is manifested in this world by the numerous graces bestowed on them to bring them to repentance, by the medicinal punishments which the Lord sends them, and by accepting others as victims of expiation for them.

Finally, as St. Thomas says, the punishments of hell are medicinal for those still on earth by reason of the just fear these sufferings inspire in them. They cannot cause the damned to repent, as those souls remain always obdurate. But even in hell divine mercy operates, in the sense that by it there is an alleviation of the punishments, so that the obdurate sinner is punished less than he deserves. If God's justice alone came into operation, the suffer-

ings of the damned would be greater than they are (Ia, q. 21, a. 4 ad 1um).

Therefore, God's mercy is always combined with His justice, this latter remaining subordinate. Both result from His love of the supreme Good. This supreme Good manifests itself primarily in the diffusion of itself, and in a secondary way by proclaiming its inalienable right to be loved above all things (Ia, q. 23, a. 5 ad 3um).

This divine mercy must excite in us feelings of hope, of love for God, and of love for those who have offended us: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy" (Matt. 5:7).

52) *Omnipotence.*

Having considered the attributes relating to the divine and immanent operations, we must now speak of that attribute which is the immediate principle of God's external operations. The divine action from which they proceed cannot be a formally transitive one, for, of necessity, this would imply an imperfection. It would be an accident emanating from the divine agency and would be received in a created being. It is a formally immanent action and is identified with the very being of God; but it is virtually transitive in so far as it produces an effect outside of God. We shall consider: *a*) infinite power in general; *b*) the creation and conservation of beings; *c*) the divine motion; *d*) the possibility of miracles.

a) *Infinite power* (Ia, q. 25). "There could not be in God," says St. Thomas, "passive power, or that aptitude to receive or to be made perfect; but He possesses active power in the highest degree. The more a being is in act and is perfect, the more it is the active principle of something; and vice versa, the more a being is imperfect and deficient, the more it is reduced to a state of passivity. Now God is pure Act, in all ways perfect, and all

imperfection is to be excluded from Him. Therefore He is in the highest degree the active principle and in no way admits of passivity" (Ia, q. 25, a. 1).

Does this mean that the active power in God is like our will, a faculty which is the principle of an accidental operation? By no means, for there is nothing accidental in God. Pure Act cannot be determined any further; its operation is its very essence. We must, therefore, eliminate every created mode from the analogical notion of active power before we can apply it to God. "In creatures, power is the principle not only of action, but likewise of effect. Thus in God the idea of power is retained, inasmuch as it is the principle of an effect; not, however, as it is a principle of action, for this is the divine essence itself; except, perchance, after our manner of understanding, inasmuch as the divine essence contains in the highest degree all the perfections to be found in created things, it can be understood either under the notion of action, or under that of power" (Ia, q. 25, a. 1 ad 3um).

The divine power is infinite, for the mode of operation follows the mode of being, and the divine being is infinite. The hotter a body is, the greater its power of heating other bodies. The more enlightened a mind is, the greater power it has to enlighten the minds of others. God, who is Being itself, must therefore have the power to give being to everything capable of receiving it, to everything for which existence is not repugnant. "And if God cannot make the impossible become a reality, that is not because His power is limited; it is because the impossible is in itself incapable of existence, and cannot become a reality. Hence it is better to say that such things cannot be done, than that God cannot do them" (Ia, q. 25, a. 3). Ockham and Descartes failed to see this, when they claimed that God's liberty and omnipotence would not be infinite if they could not make a square circle. From this it would follow that the truth of the principle of contradiction and of every essence would depend upon the divine liberty;

but the divine liberty itself would vanish, for there would be no foundation for it. God would not be of necessity the Being, the Good, the Intellect, or consequently the Liberty. He would be free to be free, as Secrétan maintained, free to be or not to be. This absolute libertinism, which is the destruction of all truth and of all being, is the height of absurdity and leads to radical nihilism.

On the other hand, to urge the claims of intellectualism, as much as Leibniz and the advocates of absolute optimism have wished to do, is to go to the other extreme. It unduly restricts God's liberty and omnipotence, in that it maintains that these divine attributes were limited in the creation of the present world, which would have to be the best of possible worlds. Undoubtedly God could not have created with greater wisdom than He has so done, nor could He dispose things *better* than as they are; but He could have created *better* things, says St. Thomas, for between a creature however perfect and the infinite goodness it represents, the distance is always infinite (Ia, q. 25, a. 5). The animal has not a better arrangement of parts than that of the plant, but it is a better and more perfect being. Man is still more perfect and of a still higher order. Above man we have the pure spirits with a greater or less degree of intellectual power. But the idea of the most perfect pure being that possibly could be created is as truly inconceivable and contradictory as is the idea of the swiftest movement. God can always create a pure spirit still more perfect. (On this point, see the solution of the antinomies relative to liberty, ch. iv, n. 62.)

b) *The creation and preservation of beings* (Ia, q. 45, 105). Omnipotence is creative. The dogma of creation may be summed up in these words: Everything which exists outside of God, of His own free will He created out of nothing, for His glory and purely of His goodness.

Of all things existing outside of God—things visible and invisible, the earth, the firmament, angels, those pure spirits as numerous as the stars, and finally man, composed as he is of soul and body—not one exists of itself, for each of them is not being itself, life itself, light itself, holiness itself, since all of them are finite. They have, therefore, of necessity received their existence from Him who is (Ia, q. 45, a. 2).

They were made out of nothing by God, which means that their whole being, absolutely their whole being, was produced by God. Before this production their being was entirely nonexistent.[76] There is an infinite distance between *creating* and acting as we do every day. Modern philosophers who often misuse the word "create," when they speak, for instance, of creative evolution, of creative imagination, or of a creative idea, have not stopped to think what these words mean: *"to make from nothing."* This word *"create"* reveals to us our absolute dependence upon God, a dependence which is the foundation of all our obligations. To understand precisely what Christian humility must be, it would be necessary for us to penetrate into the mystery of the creative act and to grasp the meaning of these words: "to make from nothing."

The sculptor makes a statue, but not from nothing. He takes the marble which he did not make, and merely gives it a certain

[76] *Ex nihilo* (out of nothing) has the same meaning as *non ex aliquo subjecto* (*not from any prior subject*), or *ex nullo praesupposito subjecto, veluti causa materiali* (*from no pre-existing subject matter, as if this were the material cause*). Sometimes the Scholastics also define creation as: *productio totius rei ex nihilo sui et subjecti: the bringing of a whole thing into existence from a state of nonexistence, and from no prior subject matter.* This production has an efficient, a final, and an exemplary cause (the divine idea), but not a material cause.

Creation differs essentially from *Pantheistic Emanation,* no matter what Cousin and various modern philosophers may have said. Emanation implies a contradiction, just as does Pantheism, which it presupposes. Either creation is *immanent,* and this implies the confusion of the finite with the infinite; or else it is *transitive* operation, and this presupposes the divisibility of the divine substance, which is absolutely one, simple, and indivisible.

form, fashioning and transforming it. He does not create the statue, he does not produce *the whole of its being*. The sculptor is a transformer, not a creator. The architect who constructs an edifice, does not create it. He merely brings together in orderly arrangement the materials which he did not produce. The father who generates a son, does not create him, does not give him the whole of his being. Something of the son's substance, the matter, a germ that developed, was pre-existent; but the father did not create this out of nothing by the mere act of his will. The thinker who works out a system of some kind does not create it. He starts from certain known facts and evident principles, setting forth a certain number of ideas under these principles so as to render the facts intelligible. He does not create, he constructs with pre-existent materials. When he afterwards instructs a disciple, he only molds and informs the disciple's intelligence, but does not create it.

Lastly, the will, when making a free act, does not produce it from nothing; the act is simply an accidental modification of the will, and presupposes a real power which it determines or informs.

A finite agent cannot create, but can only transform what already exists. The reason for this is that the most universal of effects comes from the most universal of causes. But being, as being, is the most universal of effects. The production of being as such or of the whole being of a thing, must be attributed to the most universal of causes, which is the supreme Cause. Just as fire gives out heat, and light illumines things, so also the One who is Being itself can produce being, the whole being of any given thing (Ia, q. 45, a. 5).

However insignificant this thing may be, even if it were only a grain of sand, it needs an infinite power to produce it *out of nothing*. The more impoverished, indeed, is the matter to be transformed, the more powerful must be the agent that works

upon it. The poorer is the soil, the more it must be cultivated, watered, warmed by the sun, the more also the seed sown in it must be good. When the matter is so poor that it practically amounts to nothing, an infinite power is needed to draw something, however little it may be, from this nothing. When passive power decreases, active power increases. We may go so far as to say that, when there is no longer any passive potentiality, the active power must be infinite (Ia, q. 45, a. 5 ad 3um). Only God, who is Being itself, can give to a thing the whole of its being instead of giving it a form or mode of being. Being thus suddenly originating from nothing, is the proper effect of God.

The creative act is not a formally transitive action, as if emanating from God after the manner of an accident and received in the created being. It is a formally immanent action not distinct from God's essence. But it is said to be virtually transitive in that it produces an external fact. Creation taken in the passive sense, as it affects the creature, is merely the real relation of dependence of the creature upon the Creator. There could be no question of a real relation of God to the created being; in this case there can be only a logical relation (Ia, q. 45, a. 3; and q. 13, a. 7).

To dispel the obscurity of the mystery of creation, there has been proposed in these latter days, not a mystery but a contradiction in the employment of the terms: "*Creative evolution.*" The creative act requires One who is Being itself, whereas evolution is nothing else but inconsistent becoming. That which is becoming and as yet does not exist, cannot have within itself its own sufficient reason. How is it possible for becoming, which is incapable of explaining itself, to be the principle of all the rest?

Inasmuch as God made us from nothing, it follows, in the strictest sense of the term, that of ourselves we are nothing. If we take away from ourselves what we have received from God, literally speaking, nothing remains. And as action follows being, since we are not of ourselves independent of God, we do not act

by ourselves independently of God. It would be a great illusion for us to think that we are the unique and all sufficient cause of the free determination of ourselves in what there is of good in this. "What hast thou that thou hast not received?" asks St. Paul. "By the grace of God," he says, "I am what I am" (I Cor. 4:7; 15:10).

What is the end which God has in view in thus creating everything from nothing? We have already said, when speaking of His love for creatures, that the end is His own glory or the free manifestation of His goodness. God in creating cannot seek an end inferior to the sovereign Good, which is Himself. This would be unworthy of Him. It would be the subjecting of His power, of His wisdom, and of His love to a good inferior to Himself. Neither can He create for the purpose of increasing His happiness or adding to His perfection. Therefore, the end sought by God can be only His external glory, which is nothing else but the manifestation of His goodness. "He has given being to creatures in order that His goodness might be communicated to creatures, and be represented by them" (Ia, q. 47, a. 1).

As the sun emits its rays of light, so God, who is the sovereign Good, has willed to emit the rays of His light. He has been pleased to illumine, rekindle, render all things fecund, and draw them to Himself. As the star in sending forth its rays of light adorns the darkness of night, so God has been pleased to adorn the nothingness of His creatures. As the bird fills the air with its song, so God has been pleased to sound the praises of all His perfections. This radiance on the part of God, this prodigality of song external to Himself, are the expression of His internal glory. Such an end is worthy of Him. (See Vatican Council, Denzinger, n. 1783.)

In this quest of His external glory, how could we see the least trace of egotism, since this glory is but the radiation of infinite goodness, of the beneficent riches which God wishes us to share,

just as the sun causes the earth to participate in its light and heat? God cannot will His external glory unless He also wills our good at the same time, and likewise we cannot will our true happiness without seeking God's glory. If we sought only the fulfilment of our aspirations, we should remain prisoners of ourselves. We should remain captive to a romantic sentimentalism, and should not realize the magnificence of the following prayer: "Give free rein, O Lord, to the *Alleluia* which seeks to ascend to Thee, for my heart is bursting with joy and can contain itself no longer. Gush forth, ye torrents of joy, upon the desires which are beyond the heart's control. Gush forth, ye torrents of glory. *Alleluia!*" Such is the cry of the Christian soul, and the answer to the philosophic pride that wishes God had created us only for ourselves and not for Himself. "Not to us, O Lord, not to us: but to Thy name give glory" (Ps. 113). It is humility most pronounced; compared with it pride is blind and limited. We need only compare the *"non serviam"* with the *"Magnificat."*

This external glory of God, a manifestation of His goodness, was freely willed by Him, without any moral necessity, for God is neither greater nor happier in having created the universe. Before creation He had in Himself infinite plenitude of being, of goodness, life, and happiness; creatures have added nothing to this. After creation, there have been various beings, but there has not been more being. There have been more living beings but there has not been more life; there have been various intelligences but there has not been more wisdom or sanctity or love.

It is a dogma of our faith that God created in time and not from all eternity. According to St. Thomas (Ia, q. 46), that is dependent upon divine wisdom. Even reason cannot prove the impossibility of an eternal creation. (See *supra,* n. 10.)

On the first day, before sin was, the wonderful order in creation proclaimed God's glory, just as now the starry heavens continue to show it forth. It was the most sublime symphony without any

discordant note, "from the depths of nothingness to the summit of being," from changeable matter susceptible of all passing forms even to the everlasting choirs of pure spirits, these were so many harmonious notes marvelously blended, like the melody of God the Creator. This harmony and hierarchy of beings necessarily imply inequality. The divine goodness, since it is one and simple in itself, cannot be expressed beneath itself except by a manifold variety, after the manner of coins of various value. This manifoldness cannot express the different perfections of God and the wealth of the divine ideas, unless it is itself hierarchically arranged. All the parts of a tree cannot consist of flowers; it must have roots, a trunk, branches, and leaves; all these are necessary for the beauty of the tree. So also in the universe from the stone up to the pure spirit there must be some creatures of the lower and others of a higher order (Ia, q. 47).

If the doctrine of creation is understood, then we see that the preservation of creatures follows as a consequence of this (Ia, q. 104). If, for one moment, God ceased to preserve creatures in their being, they would immediately fall into nothingness, just as the sun's ray disappears when it ceases to give light.

The imagination does not perceive this necessity for the preservation of beings. The imagination pictures many sensible effects which do not have to be preserved by the sensible cause which brought them into being. The father and mother of a child may die after it is born, and the child continues to live.

The imagination is unable to distinguish between agents which are directly the causes merely of the becoming of their effects, and those which are causes not only of the *becoming* but also of the *being itself* of their effects. This distinction can be made only by the intellect, that faculty which is concerned with being. Some examples, however, will help to make this point clear.

The father is directly the cause of the passive generation of his son, and only indirectly of the being of his son. He may die, too,

and the son may continue to live. On the contrary, other agents are causes directly both of the becoming and of the being of their effects; also, there can be no cessation of their action without a cessation of the effect. The generation of an animal depends not only upon the male parent of the animal, but also upon a vast number of cosmic influences which are also necessary for its preservation. Take away atmospheric pressure and solar heat, and the most vigorous animal will not survive for one second. In the philosophical order general agents are necessary for the preservation of beings, upon which these agents exert a beneficent influence.

Likewise, sensation or the sensible impression can subsist only so long as the object which produced it, preserves it in being. This is because it is the cause not only of its appearance, but also directly of its being. Our visual sense perception of red continues to last only because of the influence exerted by the object which causes the perception in us. A virtual focus disappears when the real focus which maintained it ceases to act.

Likewise, in the intellectual life, the knowledge of a conclusion, resulting from certain principles, disappears if we forget the principles. Why? Because they are a higher cause, a direct cause not only of becoming, but of the being of the effect. It is only because of its actually depending and not merely because of its having depended upon the principle, that the conclusion remains in force.

So too, in the volitional order, the desire continues to assert itself only so long as the good which brought it into being, attracts it. If we cease to will an end, by that very fact we cease to will the means chosen for attaining it.

It is the characteristic of a cause which is of the same species as its effect, for it to be only cause of the becoming of this effect. It is quite evident that the being of the effect cannot depend directly upon this cause, for it is as poor as the effect, participating

like it in a perfection which neither of the two can have except by reason of a higher cause.

On the contrary, it is the characteristic of a cause which is of a higher order than its effects, for it to be the direct cause not only of their becoming but also of their being. Of such a nature is either the principle with regard to the consequences, or the validity of the end with regard to that of the means.

God is the supreme cause, who is the self-subsisting Being, and every creature is being by participation. Therefore it follows that the creature not only depends upon God for its becoming, at the moment when it is produced, but also depends upon Him for its very being, and this at every moment of its existence. It would immediately fall into nothingness if, for one moment, God ceased to preserve it in its being; just as the scientific knowledge of a conclusion disappears when the principle upon which it rests is forgotten, and when the objective light which causes this knowledge in us is lost to view.

If the inferior cause which accounts for the becoming of its effect, ceases to act, there is a stop to becoming. If the higher cause which directly accounts for the very being of its effect ceases to act, at this very moment the effect ceases to be.[77]

"The preservation of things by God is not effected by a new divine action, but it is a continuation of that creative action whereby He gives existence. This divine action is without either motion or time" (Ia, q. 104, a. 1 ad 4um). "Nor does He preserve things in existence otherwise than by continually pouring out existence into them" (*Ibid.*, a. 3).

God, who freely created all things, by reason of His absolute power could annihilate all creatures by ceasing to preserve them

[77] St. Thomas (Ia, q. 104, a. 1) says: "Therefore as the *becoming* of a thing cannot continue when that action of the agent ceases which causes the becoming of the effect: so neither can the *being* of a thing continue after that action of the agent has ceased which is the cause of the effect not only in becoming but also in being."

in being. But *de facto* nothing is annihilated by God, neither spirits nor matter. He does not do so, either according to the ordinary course of things in nature,[78] or even by working a miracle, for He has no motive for doing so. Annihilation would not be a manifestation of any divine perfection (Ia, q. 104, a. 4).

Such is the Thomistic and classical teaching of the theologians concerning the preservation of creatures. With Descartes it lost its simplicity and its profundity.

c) *The divine motion* (Ia, q. 105). After treating of the preservation of beings, which is a consequence of creation, St. Thomas speaks of the divine motion. We shall see what are the essential points in his teaching without insisting much on it here, for we have already spoken of the relations between the divine motion and our freedom of action in connection with God's foreknowledge of free acts of the future (n. 49, *b*). We shall have to return to this subject when we give the solution of the antinomies relating to liberty (nn. 64, 65).

St. Thomas (Ia, q. 105, a. 1) begins by saying that God can *immediately* transform prime matter. He alone has this power, just as He alone has been able to produce matter, which can come into existence by creation only. Only the proper cause of a determinate effect can immediately transform it; for the immediate transformation of a thing is of the same order specifically as that of its immediate production. Only God, who is able to create or produce the whole being of a substance, can change the being, inasmuch as it is being, of this substance or transubstantiate it (IIIa, q. 75, a. 4). God, who alone can bring matter into existence, can transform it immediately, can change, for instance, in a

[78] The corruption of animals and of plants is no more annihilation than their generation can be called creation. Their essential form was not created out of nothing like the human soul. This form was in the potentiality of the matter, and when they die, it is not annihilated but remains in the potentiality of the matter (Ia, q. 104, a. 4 ad 3um).

moment, water into wine without any predisposing accidental alterations. On the contrary, a created agent can only *mediately* transform matter, by means of the accidental changes it is capable of producing in it (Ia, q. 110, a. 2, 3, 4). Thus only our intellect can immediately modify its own judgment; the imagination can do so only mediately through the intermediary of images. This conclusion is of great importance for the discernibility of miracles. The immediate transformation of matter surpasses all created powers, both known and unknown. Now this transformation is verified in the resurrection of a dead person, in the multiplication of the loaves, in the instantaneous change of water into wine, and other such instances.

For the same reason, God, who alone was able to bring our intellects into existence by creation, can move them immediately not only by the presentation of an object, but also subjectively by enlightening them and reinforcing the intellectual faculty. Thus God alone is the cause of certitude in prophetic knowledge [79] and in supernatural faith.

God alone can move a created will subjectively. He alone was able to create it and direct it to universal good and to the sovereign Good which is Himself. The order of agents must correspond to the order of ends. He moves the will interiorly without doing any violence to it; for He maintains it in its natural inclination for universal good, and awakens in it this natural inclination when He prompts it to determine itself for some particular good (Ia, q. 105, a. 4; q. 111, a. 2); "God alone can enter the soul" (IIIa, q. 64, a. 1).

Does God move all secondary causes in all their actions? (Ia, q. 105, a. 5.) Holy Scripture replies: "He worketh all in all" (I Cor. 12:6). "For in Him we live and move and are" (Acts 17:28). "Thou hast wrought all our works in us" (Is. 26:12).

We must not understand this as the *Occasionalists* do, in the

[79] See Ia, q. 105, a. 3; q. 111, a. 1; IIa IIae, q. 173, a. 2; q. 172, a. 5 ad 2um.

sense that God alone acts in all things, that it is not the fire that gives out heat but God in the fire or that the fire is the occasion of this. If it were so, remarks St. Thomas, secondary causes would not be causes and could not act, and their existence would be to no purpose. Their powerlessness would prove, moreover, that God was unable to communicate action and life to them, after the manner of an artist who can produce only lifeless works; and this would imply lack of power in the Creator. Occasionalism leads to Pantheism, for operation follows being; and the mode of operation, the mode of being. If there were only one operation, the divine operation, then there would be only one being; creatures are absorbed in God; abstract being becomes identified with the divine being, as required by Ontological Realism, which is so dear to Malebranche and, according to his theory, is so closely connected with Occasionalism.

Molinism is, as we shall see, diametrically opposed to Occasionalism. It maintains that the secondary cause can act without divine premotion. Whereas Malebranche admits the theory of Ontological Realism, according to which we see all things in God, Molina, as we know, has much in common with the Nominalists.

The view taken by St. Thomas is more exalted than these extreme doctrines, which are true in what they affirm, but false in what they deny. The basic principles of the Thomistic thesis have been already stated. They are moderate realism and the analogy of being. Only God is Being itself; the creature is a composite of essence and existence. Now, operation follows being; and the mode of operation, the mode of being. Therefore only God is self-active; the creature really acts just as it really exists, but it acts only by God's help.

How are we to understand this? St. Thomas answers (Ia, q. 105, a. 5): "(1) God moves all secondary causes, first as an end. For every operation is for the sake of some good and every good participates in the likeness to the Supreme Good. (2) God moves

every secondary cause in the right of first agent. Where there are several agents in order, the second always acts in virtue of the first: for the first agent always moves the second to act. And thus all agents act in virtue of God Himself; and therefore He is the cause of action in every created agent.[80] (3) God not only moves all things to operate, as the workman applies the axe to cut, but He gives to each creature its nature and preserves this in each. He gives what is innermost to each, its very being, preserving this in each. Thus God works intimately in all things."

"God not only gives things their form (or nature), but He also preserves them in existence, and applies them to act (*applicat eas ad agendum*), and is the end of every action" (*ibid.*, ad 3um). "One action does not proceed from two agents of the same order. But nothing hinders the same action from proceeding from a primary and a secondary agent" (ad 2um). "God works sufficiently in things as First Agent, but it does not follow from this that the operation of secondary agents is superfluous" (ad 1um).

St. Thomas develops the same doctrine in the *Contra Gentes*

[80] St. Thomas (Ia IIae, q. 111, a. 2), when treating of *operating* and *co-operating* grace, undoubtedly distinguishes two movements in the will: "A first in which the will is *moved without moving itself*, and it is with reference to this that we speak of *operating grace*. There is a second movement in which the will both *moves and is moved*, and it is with reference to this that we speak of *co-operating grace*." But even in this second act in which the will moves, the divine co-operating motion has a *priority of nature* over the motion which the will exerts upon itself. It is a case of applying the principle enunciated in the fifth article of question 105, the one which we are now explaining: "Where there are several *agents* in order, the *second* always *acts in virtue of the first: for the first agent moves the second to act. And then all agents act in virtue of God Himself: and therefore He is the cause of action in every agent.*"

"And He alone can change this inclination (of the will), who bestowed on the creature the power to will" (Ia, q. 106, a. 2). "Every act of the will, inasmuch as it is an act, not only is from the will as the immediate agent, but it is also from God as the primary agent, who more vehemently impels it. Wherefore, just as the will can change its act for another, *much more so can God do this in it*" (*De veritate*, q. 22, a. 8; also a. 9). "Man cannot make use of the will power given to him *except inasmuch as he acts by God's power*" (*Contra Gentes*, Bk. III, ch. lxxxix).

(Bk. III, ch. lxvii). In the *De potentia* (q. 3, a. 7) he shows that God is the cause of every created action and this in four ways: (1) because He has given to the creature the power or the faculty to act; (2) because He preserves this in the creature; (3) because He applies this to action inasmuch *as He moves it to act,* by which is not meant a bestowal or preservation of the active power but the *application* of the faculty to action; (4) because He moves it, as the principal agent moves its instrument so as to produce in the effect what is beyond the proper power of the instrument to produce, which in this case is the *being itself* of the action. In fact, being is that which in all things is most profound and most universal; consequently it is the effect which belongs *properly* to God, just as the effect which belongs properly to the artist is that which he alone produces by the way in which he animates and ennobles his instrument. "Nor does anything act to produce being except by God's power. For it is precisely being that is the most common of all effects, the first effect and more intimate than all other effects; and therefore it befits only God in accordance with the proper power of such effect." Likewise every participated absolute perfection (*simpliciter simplex,* absolutely simple), such as liberty or intellect, requires for its actualization God's intervention, in the rôle, for instance, of the First Intelligent and of the First Free Being.[81]

What then does the second cause do? St. Thomas answers in the article just referred to, that it is the cause of the action precisely inasmuch as this latter is *this* individual action. In like manner, he says (Ia, q. 104, a. 1): "Of two things in the same species one cannot directly cause the other's form as *such* (of such a species), since it would then be the cause of its own form which is essentially the same as the form of the other; but it can be the

[81] "A more perfect order prevails in spiritual beings than in corporeal. But in corporeal beings, all motion is caused by the first motion. Therefore, in spiritual beings, it must needs be that every movement of the will be caused by the *first will,* which is the will of God." *Contra Gentes,* Bk. III, ch. lxxxix.

cause of this form for as much as it is in matter; in other words, it may be the cause that *this* matter receives this *form*. Thus it is the cause of the *becoming* of the effect and not directly of its *being*," as we have shown in the preceding section apropos of the preservation of creatures.

The *second cause* is therefore the *instrumental cause of the being precisely as being of its effect*, which under this aspect depends directly upon God. Does it follow, as maintained by Occasionalism, that it is not properly the cause of anything? Not at all, for *it is the proper cause of the becoming and consequently of the individuality of its effect.*

Must we say with Molina, whose view is the very reverse of Occasionalism, that the secondary cause exerts its own causality without the need of its being premoved by the first cause? That is impossible, for *the secondary cause exerts its own causality only under the influence of the first cause, which applies it to its act.*[82] Why is this? Since of itself the secondary cause cannot *reduce itself from potentiality to act*, it must be moved or applied to act. Besides, the individuality of its effect is still being, and for this reason it depends upon the first cause.

Just as being is common to all things and penetrates their most minute particularizations, so the transcendent cause of the being precisely as such of things, remains the first cause of everything that exists. But whoever speaks of a first cause does not speak of the sole and immediate cause of everything that exists. We cannot, says St. Thomas, distinguish in the reality of a given effect, between what would depend exclusively upon God and what would depend solely upon the secondary cause: "*non est distinctum quod est ex causa secunda et ex causa prima*, there is no dis-

[82] Thus the instrument produces its *proper* effect only because it is *applied* to produce this, and it produces its *instrumental* or higher effect only because it is *ennobled* by the principle agent. The pen leaves its imprint on the paper only because it is *moved* by the hand, and it leaves an *artistic imprint* because it is *manipulated* by an artist. He alone knows how to move it with *artistic effect*.

tinction between what proceeds from a secondary cause and from a first cause" (Ia, q. 23, a. 5). Thus the resulting action is attributed *entirely* to the created agent which acts as a secondary cause, and it is attributed *entirely* to God who acts as primary cause. It is only evil which, since it is a deficiency, depends exclusively upon the created and defective cause.

Thus Thomism avoids the two opposite extremes of Occasionalism and of Molinism. It excels them, only their negations being rejected, by means of an affirmative of a higher order. The reason for this is because it contains every positive element found in them. Occasionalism suppresses created causality. Molinism views the first and secondary causes as two *partial and co-ordinated causes* of one effect, which may be likened, says Molina, to two men pulling a boat. This does away with the universal causality of the primary agent. Thomism looks upon the first cause and the secondary as two *total causes,* one of them being *subordinate* to the other. Both created causality and the universal causality of the First Cause are affirmed by it. It is neither dualism nor Monism nor Pantheism, but the perfect subordination of the created to the uncreated. There is an abundance of texts in which St. Thomas applies these principles to liberty.[83]

[83] We have quoted them already (n. 49, *b*) in connection with God's foreknowledge of future free acts, and we will again refer to them in nn. 64, 65, when we offer a solution of the antinomies relative to liberty. It suffices here to quote Ia, q. 19, a. 8; q. 22, a. 2 ad 4um: "But since the very act of free will is traced to God as to a cause, it necessarily follows that everything happening from the exercise of free will must be subject to divine providence." Also Ia, q. 83, a. 1 ad 3um: "God by moving voluntary causes does not deprive their actions of being voluntary, but He is the cause rather of this very thing in them." See also Ia, q. 103, a. 5–8; q. 105, a. 4; q. 106, a. 2: "He alone can change this inclination (of the will), who bestowed on the creature the power to will." Cf. also Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 4 ad 1um and 3um; Ia IIae, q. 109, a. 1.

Also *Contra Gentes,* Bk. I, ch. lxviii; Bk. III, chs. lxx, lxxxix, xc, xci, xciv: "How the movement of the will is caused by God and not solely from the power of the will. That choice and the human will are subject to divine providence." "All intellects and wills, like instruments which depend upon the principal agent, are dependent upon God who is the first Intellect and the first Will." Bk. III, ch. cxlviii. *De veritate,* q. 22, a. 8, 9; q. 24, a. 14. *De malo,* q. 6, a. 1 ad 3um; q. 16,

But how are we to conceive of the divine action which produces in this way an effect that is external to God? This action, as was said in connection with creation, is formally immanent and virtually transitive. There is no real distinction between it and the being itself of God (Ia, q. 25, a. 1 ad 3um). It is not formally transitive as is the accidental action of a created agent which is received in the "patient" upon which it operates. But it is said to be virtually transitive since it possesses in an eminent degree all the perfection of a transitive action to the exclusion of its imperfections, and since it can consequently produce an external effect.

Is there not, however, any created motion which is received in the secondary cause? Is operating or co-operating actual grace merely the uncreated action of God, or is it the salutary act of which this uncreated action is said to be the cause?

St. Thomas replies in the article in which he treats this question *ex professo* and more at length (*De potentia*, q. 3, a. 7 ad 7um). He says: "What is produced by God in the secondary cause and in virtue of which it actually acts, is in it in a way intentional and transitory, just as colors are in the air or artistic motion is in the instrument manipulated by the artist." [84] Likewise, in connection with actual grace, he says that it is in the soul "a gratuitous effect on the part of God, a certain movement of the soul . . . inasmuch as man's soul is moved by God to know or will or do something" (Ia IIae, q. 110, a. 2). Finally we read in *Contra Gentes* (Bk. III,

a. 8; q. 3, a. 2 ad 4um: "When anything moves itself, this does not exclude its being moved by another, from which it has even this that it moves itself. Thus it is not repugnant to liberty that God is the cause of the free act of the will."

[84] "*That which is effected by God in the natural thing, by which it actually acts, is only as intentional, having a certain incomplete existence,* in the way in which colors are in the air and artistic power is in the instrument of the artist. . . . The proper power could be conferred upon the natural thing, as its permanent form, but not as ■ *force by which it acts to produce being* as the instrument of the first cause, unless there were given to it to be the universal principle of being. *Nor again could there be conferred upon it by natural power that it should move itself,* or that it should preserve itself in being."

ch. cxlix): "By right of reason and causality the motion of the mover precedes the motion of the thing movable." And in Book III, ch. lxvi, we read: "For the secondary agent receives its complement of power from the primary agent."

Such is the teaching of St. Thomas upon divine motion. We are astonished that certain persons should have sought to see in this merely an extrinsic assistance on the part of God. The texts do not permit of such an interpretation.[85]

[85] See John of St. Thomas, *Cursus philosophicus, philosophia naturalis,* q. 25, a. 2: "That motion cannot be the operation itself of the created cause, if indeed that motion is previous to such operation and moves the being to the same. It is not, therefore, the action itself of the created cause, for this action cannot move the cause as agent but as patient."

See also Del Prado, *De gratia et libero arbitrio* (1907 ed.), Part II, pp. 178–295, and Part III, ch. xii, pp. 478–521, for his criticism of the interpretation of St. Thomas and of Cajetan given by Cardinals Pecci and Satolli, as well as by Bishop Paquet and Bishop Jansens. In opposition to the Molinists and the Suarezians, these theologians teach that middle knowledge is inconceivable, and that the divine influx necessary for the free act is a physical motion, co-operating and intrinsically efficacious. But in addition to this they say that this motion is not previous and that it has neither priority of time nor of nature over the secondary cause. They tell us that St. Thomas spoke only of *motion,* and not of *premotion,* which latter would be to favor Determinism,

Del Prado (Bk. III, pp. 501–507) shows that this new interpretation cannot be called Cajetan-Thomist, but merely Bellarmine-Congruist. In fact, it must logically end in Bellarmine's thesis on both motion and foreknowledge.

It is evident that, according to St. Thomas and Cajetan, the divine co-operating motion has a *priority,* not of time, but of nature or of causality over the secondary cause, since it is in virtue of this cause that the secondary cause acts. True, it moves itself, but as a subordinate agent and *in virtue of the first agent* (Ia, q. 105, a. 5).

If St. Thomas does not use the word "premotion" it is because this word implies a *tautology;* all motion has a priority of nature and of causality over its effect. If the Thomists use this word, they do so in order to prevent the divine motion, such as it is conceived by St. Thomas, from being confused with the simultaneous concurrence as devised by Molina. Finally, premotion does not lead to Determinism; rather it is the only answer to the Determinists' objection based upon the principle of causality.

Co-operating grace retains a priority over our activity. "Grace is said to be co-operating inasmuch as it gives the *inclination to the intrinsic and extrinsic act,* and inasmuch as it endows the faculty with the gift of final perseverance" (*De veritate,* q. 27, a. 5 ad 11um). See also Ia IIae, q. 111, a. 2.

Father Sertillanges (*S. Thomas d'Aquin,* I, 265) writes: "How much dust has

Objections of the Molinists to the Thomistic doctrine. With regard to the divine motion, Molina and Suarez thought they must abandon the teaching of St. Thomas. Molina, after presenting this doctrine as given by St. Thomas (Ia, q. 105, a. 5), writes: "There are two difficulties in it for me: (1) I do not see what is in secondary causes, this application by which God moves and applies these causes to act. I think rather that the fire heats without the need of its being moved to act. And I frankly confess that it is very difficult for me to understand this motion and application which St. Thomas requires in secondary causes. (2) There is another difficulty. According to this doctrine, God does not concur immediately (*immediatione suppositi*) in the action and in the effect of secondary causes, but only through the intermediary of these causes."

Molina could have found the solution of these two difficulties in the passage of the *De potentia* (q. 3, a. 7 ad 7um) which we have just quoted, in which it is said that there is a direct influx

been raised about these two words, 'physical premotion.' The greater number of people have not taken into account that, if one wishes by this phrase to qualify the very action of God, conceived as in relation to ours, what in the first place is forgotten is the general law that the relations are not from God to us, but solely from us to God. And afterwards, as regards the present case, a threefold verbal heresy is committed. First, a heresy as regards the plan of action, which is not 'physical' but ontological. Then there is a heresy as regards its form, which is not properly 'motion,' but creation. Finally, there is a heresy as regards its measure, which is not temporal (*prae:* before), but immobile and adequate with eternity."

As a matter of fact, the Thomists all teach that even God's external action (*ad extra*) is formally immanent and virtually transitive. When they speak of the divine motion, as in the case of operating and co-operating grace, if they call it physical, it is not as opposed to metaphysics but to morality or objectivity. If they say it is premotion, that is not because they admit a priority of time, but only of nature. Finally, we cannot admit that the divine action which moves secondary causes to act is properly creation and not motion; for creation is the production of the whole being of a thing from nothingness. If God were to create our acts instead of moving us to produce them, He alone would act, and then Occasionalism would be true. St. Thomas, who always speaks in a formal manner, distinguishes between creation and motion, and he does not even admit that sanctifying grace is produced in our soul by creation, but that it is deduced from the obediential potentiality of the soul.

from God upon the entity of the action and of the effect. But what interests us in his objection is the way he avows that physical premotion is really to be found in the works of St. Thomas. Later on, indeed, many Molinists, in order to avoid being in direct opposition to St. Thomas, claimed that this doctrine had been devised by Bannez, and they called it Bannezianism.[86] Even now several manuals thus designate it.

The Jesuits of Coimbra,[87] like Molina, acknowledge that physical premotion was taught by St. Thomas and his earliest commentators, Capreolus and Ferrariensis. It is a previous motion, a certain influx and motion which is, as it were, an intentional entity of the divine power by which secondary causes are aroused to action. Bellarmine[88] and also Toletus, S.J.,[89] speak in the same way. Suarez[90] also admits it, although he gratuitously asserts and maintains that later on St. Thomas made a tacit retractation of it. (Cf. Dummermuth, *op. cit.*, p. 216, note 1.)

Rejecting the divine premotion, Molina and Suarez acknowledge merely a *simultaneous divine concurrence.* "This general concurrence on God's part," says Molina,[91] "is not an influx received in the secondary cause which premoves it to act and to produce its effect, but it is an influx immediately exerted upon the action and the effect along with the secondary cause." If such be

[86] On this point see Billuart, *De gratia,* diss. 5, a. 7, sec. 3; Del Prado, *De gratia et libero arbitrio,* Part III, p. 427; Dummermuth, *S. Thomas et doctrina praemotionis physicae.* Cardinal Gonzalez, O.P., in his *Philosophia elementaris* (Bk. IV, *Theodicea,* ch. iv, a. 3), writes as follows: "Certain persons, in their endeavor to turn light into darkness, are not afraid to assert that it was only the doctrine of simultaneous concurrence but not that of physical premotion which St. Thomas so ardently defended. . . . To be sure, Molina and certain disciples of his treat this subject in a more honorable and dignified manner when they candidly acknowledge that, on this point, they depart from the teaching of St. Thomas."

[87] Conimbricenses, *In physicam,* Bk. II, ch. vii, q. 15.

[88] *De gratia et libero arbitrio,* IV, ch. xvi.

[89] See the texts of Toletus quoted by Dummermuth, *S. Thomas et doctrina praemotionis physicae,* pp. 689–699.

[90] Suarez, *Disp. metaph.,* disp. 22, sec. 2, and *De auxiliis gratiae,* III, ch. xxxviii.

[91] *Concordia,* q. 14, a. 13, disp. 26.

the case, it is no longer true to say that God moves secondary causes to act or applies them to their operations. Quite to the contrary, God and the secondary cause would be *two partial and co-ordinated causes*. Says Molina: "It is as when two men are pulling a boat. All the motion comes from each of them, although each one is not the total cause of the motion." [92] Moreover, Molina expressly says: "For us the divine concurrence does not determine the will to consent. On the contrary, it is *the particular influx of the free will which determines the divine concurrence in the act*, according as the will proceeds to will rather than not to will, willing this thing rather than that." [93] Secondary causes, far from being determined by God, by their action determine the very exercise of the divine causality,[94] which of itself is indifferent.

But if it be so, then there is something which escapes the universal causality of the first agent; for, in fine, the influx exerted by the secondary cause is really something, this being a *perfection* for it to *pass into act*.[95] How can it, of itself alone, give itself this perfection which it did not possess? The greater does not come from the less, this being contrary to the principle of causality and to the principle of the universal causality of the first agent. Is it by going against the principle of causality that we can refute Determinism? Is it not rather by insisting upon the *transcendent*

[92] *Ibid.*

[93] *Concordia*, on q. 23, a. 4, 5, disp. 1, membr. 7 ad 6um.

[94] As Goudin remarks in his *Philosophia* (*De praemotione*, art. 1), the Thomists teach with St. Thomas that the divine motion adapts itself to the nature of secondary causes, for God moves beings according to their nature; whereas Molinists teach that the divine concurrence is determined effectively *by* the secondary causes.

[95] The Molinists answer this by saying: "The transition to act" is nothing which is external to the *being* of the cause and to the *being* of the operation which explains the simultaneous concurrence. The Thomists do not claim that the "transition to act" is an entity distinct from the act. It is the act itself *in fieri:* in the becoming. But the fact of producing its act, of "determining itself," is so truly a *perfection* for the will, that the entire system of Molinism is devised to safeguard this delicate perfection, which not even God can influence, so they say. On this point, cf. H. Gayraud, *Thomisme et Molinisme*, p. 167.

efficacy of the first cause that this is accomplished? The Molinists have a dread of the intrinsic efficacy of divine grace; they fear that it does away with liberty. On the contrary, St. Thomas says (Ia, q. 19, a. 8) that if liberty remains intact it is precisely because of the *transcendent efficacy* of the divine causality which is capable of realizing not only what it wills, but also *as to the manner* of its being done (either necessarily or freely), which has been willed from all eternity.[96]

In the second place, in the transition to act independently of God, how can the secondary cause determine the divine concurrence both as to its functioning and as to its specification? To determine it in this manner is to perfect it, which would be a reversal of the rôle assigned to each. God cannot wait for the human being to arouse himself from a state of indifference and perfect his own concurrence. God would thus be under the influence of created causes and would be submitting to their direction.

It would be the same as if we were to admit an *indifferent premotion,* by which God would determine us merely to an indeliberate act, in such a manner that the free will would determine itself and the divine motion to produce this or that particular act. Something real would escape God's universal causality. There would be a determination independent of God's supreme determination, which is that of pure Act. A secondary liberty would be found acting independently of the primary liberty. *The main thing in the work of salvation, the determining of our salutary act, would not come from the Author of salvation.*[97]

They bring forward the objection that the will, already moved by God to will its happiness, is in act and consequently can *of*

[96] "Since, then, the divine will is perfectly *efficacious,* it follows not only that things are done, which God wills to be done, but also that they are done *in the way* that He wills" (Ia, q. 19, a. 8).

[97] Cf. *infra,* n. 65, and Appendix IV, *"St. Thomas and Neomolinism,"* ch. i, art. 1; ch. iv, art. 1.

itself alone reduce itself to the act which consists in choosing the means. This interpretation claims to be based upon a passage of St. Thomas (Ia IIae, q. 9, a. 6 ad 3um). This passage cannot be understood in this sense.[98] To the objection that, "if God alone moves the will, it can never commit sin," St. Thomas replies: "The will is not *only moved by God* but *it also moves itself;* consequently it can fail." St. Thomas does not say that the will of itself alone reduces itself in act to choose the means.

This answer by no means excludes the divine motion necessary for the act to be a free one, a motion which is, as we have seen, always affirmed by St. Thomas,[99] even for the physical act of sin (Ia IIae, q. 79, a. 2).[100] Moreover, concerning the manner in which the will *is moved* by God and *moves itself* under the influence of the divine motion, this point is clearly explained (Ia IIae, q. 111, a 2): "There is a first kind of act in which the will [101] is moved and does not move, but in which God is the sole mover; this is called operating grace. There is a second act in which the will both *moves* and is *moved,* then the operation is attributed not only to God, but also to the soul, and in this case the grace is said to be *co-operating.*" Likewise (Ia, q. 63, a. 5) it

[98] We have already quoted and explained this passage in n. 49, *B.* "God moves man's will, as the Universal Mover, to the universal object of the will, which is good. And without this universal motion, man cannot will anything. But man determines himself by his reason to will this or that, which is true or apparent good. Nevertheless, sometimes God moves some specially to the willing of something determinate, which is good; as in the case of those whom He moves by grace, as we shall see later on" (Ia. IIae, q. 109, 112). From this passage we see that God is not *alone* in moving the will but that the will also moves itself under the influence of the divine motion. In the following question (Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 4), St. Thomas states precisely the manner in which the will is moved by God in the emission of its free act. "It is *moved freely* as befitting its nature."

[99] St. Thomas often insists upon this in these terms: *"When anything moves itself this does not exclude its being moved by another from which it derives even this that it moves itself. Thus it is not repugnant to liberty for God to be the cause of the act of the free will." De malo,* q. 3, a. 2 ad 4um.

[100] See *infra,* n. 65, "Moral evil and the divine universal causality."

[101] In the text the word "mind" occurs, for the divine motion is exerted not only on the will but also on the intellect.

is stated that the angels could not have sinned in the first instant of their creation, but only in the second.

In its second act the will is not only *mobile* but also *agent;* we have here an application of the general principle enunciated by St. Thomas (Ia, q. 105, a. 5), when he discusses this question *ex professo:* "Where there are *several agents in order,* the *second* always *acts* [in this case the will which moves itself] *in virtue of the first:* for the first agent moves the second to act. And thus all agents act in virtue of God Himself: *and therefore He is the cause of action in every agent.*" The secondary cause acts only in virtue of the influence exerted upon it by the first cause. But God is not bound to prevent a naturally defectible agent from failing sometimes.

Neither can we say that premotion is merely required for the transition from the potentiality of choosing to the actual choice of a thing, and that it depends solely upon ourselves whether this choice is accepted or refused (*volitio vel nolitio,* volition or nolition). If such were the case, our act, inasmuch as it is an entity, would but imperfectly depend upon God, and inasmuch as it is determined, it would not depend upon Him. Now, liberty in us is, like being, the participation of an absolute perfection (*perfectio simpliciter simplex,* an absolutely simple perfection). Also, since every being as such depends upon the uncreated Being, every secondary liberty as such depends upon the primary liberty; and for the same reason, every created determination depends upon the supreme determination, which is that of pure Act. God would no longer be pure Act if there were a single determination or a single act not dependent upon Him for its existence. Moreover, if in these given circumstances the divine motion is *indifferent,* then it would be actually inclined to both good and evil; the determination of our salutary act would not come from the Author of salvation. Contrary to the testimony of St. Paul when he says: "*Who distinguisheth thee? Or what hast thou that thou hast not*

received?" (I Cor. 4:7), it would be man himself who does the distinguishing.

Finally, if we reject premotion in the Thomistic sense, we are led to the theory of middle knowledge, which attributes a passivity to God and which, instead of safeguarding created liberty, implies determinism of the circumstances. (See n. 49, B.)

"Every being, whatever the mode of its being, must be derived from the First Being . . . God is the cause of every action, in so far as it is an action" (Ia IIae, q. 79, a. 2). "Every movement of the will must be caused by the first will which is God's will" (*Contra Gentes,* Bk. III, ch. lxxxix). "Thou hast wrought all our works for us" (Is. 26:12).

Conclusion. From this we see that Thomism, which is at the terminus of descendent metaphysics, while explaining the starting-point of ascendent metaphysics, reunites itself to it. This starting-point was twofold: rational and experimental. On the rational side we have the first principles of reason, especially the principle of identity or of contradiction; on the experimental side we have the facts of experience, especially the movement of sensible things and that of our conscious life. From the closeness of approach of the principle of identity (affirmed by Parmenides) to that of movement (affirmed by Heraclitus), has originated the Aristotelian doctrine of potentiality and act, the only one capable of upholding the existence of becoming without denying the real validity of the first principle of reason. This doctrine contains what truth there is in the exaggerated realism of such Intellectualists as Parmenides and the more modern Spinoza, and in the Nominalism of such Empirics as Heraclitus and many modern philosophers. It serves as a guide for the distinction made in every finite being between potentiality and act, between essence and existence. In virtue of the principles of identity and causality, it leads us necessarily to affirm the existence of a first cause, of a pure act, of one who is Being itself in whom essence and existence

are identical. Such a concept of God makes Him essentially distinct from beings in the world, which are composed of essence and existence and which are subjects of motion. It is the terminus of ascendent metaphysics.

The descendent metaphysics is explained by the higher principles, by the supreme Cause and by those facts which served as starting-point for us and especially by the principle of movement. Operation follows being, and the mode of operation follows the mode of being. Therefore He alone who is Being itself can be self-active, and no other being can either exist or act except by reason of its dependence upon God. This doctrine is that of the creation and the preservation of beings and of the divine motion. Thus we come back to motion and explain it without causing any detriment to the principles of identity and causality.

It has not been sufficiently pointed out how the systems opposed to Thomism in the descendent metaphysics are closely related with those opposed to the ascendent metaphysics of Aristotle. When Aristotle gave us his teaching on potentiality and act, in the first two books of his Physics, and in the ninth book of his Metaphysics, he had against him on the one hand the Megarians who were disciples of Parmenides and who denied potentiality, admitting only act; they were Determinists and the forerunners of Spinoza and Leibniz. On the other hand, Aristotle had against him the disciples of Heraclitus who denied all determination or all act. This sort of contingency has often reappeared among modern philosophers.

Thomism in its descendent metaphysics, when seeking to reconcile the divine with created causality, likewise encounters two opposing systems: on the one hand, Occasionalism, denying created potentiality and created causality; Leibnizian Dynamism, reducing potentiality to a prevented act, which it calls force; and Jansenism, maintaining there is no proximate *power* of doing good apart from the very performance of the good act. All these

ways of viewing the subject recall what the Megarians said, namely, that there is no potentiality as distinct from act. (See *Metaphysics,* Bk. IX, ch. iii; St. Thomas, lect. 3.)

On the other hand, Thomism encounters Molinism, which is a sort of Indeterminism, in which the absolute exigencies of the principle of causality are no longer safeguarded. Determinism is not answered by imposing a restriction upon the principle of causality; rather the answer is to be found in the concept of potentiality (undetermined being), and in the *transcendent* efficacy of the first agent, a transcendence which, instead of clashing with created causality, is the cause of it and of the freedom of our acts.

Thomistic metaphysics, whether it reaches God by the ascendent order or the descendent order, is certainly not an Eclecticism, a middle system, favoring a sort of half-way position between the extremes. Its method has nothing in common with Opportunism. The very essence of Thomism is based upon a law which is peculiar to itself. It is therefore superior to the contrary systems which it attacks, and to the intermediate systems which it surpasses. Thus good is superior to evil, by way of excess in the former and by way of defect in the latter, and it is also above the mediocre. From this point of view, the opposing systems appear true in what they affirm, and false in what they deny. In accordance with the findings of philosophy, Thomism effects a reconciliation between the demands of reason and those of experience, and it ultimately reconciles even divine with created causality, without taking anything away from either. (See *infra,* ch. iv.)

d) *The possibility of miracles* (Ia, q. 105, a. 6–8). For the completion of this question of God's omnipotence, it remains for us to say a few words about the possibility of miracles. A miracle, as the word implies, excites admiration and is an effect accomplished by God outside the order of nature. Rationalism aims to reduce a

miracle to an extraordinary event that results from natural laws still unknown, but an event which religious feeling regards as a manifestation of divine benevolence toward us. Contrary to this, the Church considers a miracle to be a divine fact which manifestly displays the intervention of divine omnipotence: *"factum divinum Dei omnipotentian luculenter commonstrans."* [102] St. Thomas explicitly defines "miracle" as an effect produced by God in the world, an effect which is beyond the sphere of action of all created natures. "In this anything is said to be miraculous, in that it is against the order of the whole created nature. But God alone can do this" (Ia, q. 110, a. 4). Thus defined, a miracle is not beyond the ordination of divine Providence, but is merely beyond the sphere of action of all created natures. At any rate, it would not be enough for a miracle to be beyond the causal laws of some particular nature, for otherwise to throw a stone upward would be a miracle, since according to the very law of its nature, the stone must fall. But if the miraculous effect must exceed all created *forces,* it does not have to exceed all created natures. The resurrection of the body restores supernaturally to the corpse a natural and not a supernatural life, as is that of grace. Only grace, which is a participation of the divine nature, exceeds all created natures. Therefore, in defining miracle, we must speak only of the order of action and not of the order of *being* or of *essence* in created natures.

Thus defined, there is an essential difference between a miracle and natural occurrences whether extraordinary or fortuitous; as also between a miracle and either diabolical manifestations or ordinary divine interventions such as the preservation of created things, the creation of souls, and the divine motion required for every agent that it may act. It is also distinct from the infusion of grace as in the case of conversion (Ia IIae, q. 113, a. 9, 10).

[102] Vatican Council, Denzinger, 1790. On this question of miracles, cf. also Garrigou-Lagrange, *De revelatione,* II, 35–106.

Miracles are divided into three kinds according to the various ways in which they surpass all created powers (Ia, q. 105, a. 8). (1) A miracle may surpass these powers *in the very essence* of the effect produced, as in the case of the glorious resurrection from the dead. The glorification of the body, reflecting that of the soul, is an effect which by its nature exceeds the power of every created cause. (2) The miraculous effect may surpass all created powers *as regards the subject* in which it is produced, and not as regards its essence, as when these powers are able to produce it in another subject. Thus nature is able to produce life, but not in a corpse. The raising of a person to life and the cure of a person incurably blind, are miracles of this class. (3) The miraculous effect may surpass all created powers merely *according to the mode* in which it is produced. Of this kind are the instantaneous cure of a disease which cannot be cured by natural means except after some time, or again the immediate changing of water into wine.

The possibility of miracles when so defined, is denied by those who reject God's existence or His providence or His liberty or His omnipotence. To prove this possibility, it does not suffice to appeal to His omnipotence viewed apart from His liberty, for a miracle is the effect of an exceptional intervention of God's liberty in the world. And Spinoza who, though directly denying God's omnipotence, rejected His liberty, must deny the possibility of miracles. In fact, if God acted externally, always according to a necessity of nature, He could produce effects which surpass created powers (such as creation, preservation, concurrence, or ordinary motion), but He would always produce them in the same manner, just as the vital principle in plants always produce in the same way the vital phenomena which are superior to the physico-chemical phenomena. St. Thomas, too, has recourse formally to the divine liberty in proving the possibility of miracles (Ia, q. 105, a. 6).

His proof may be reduced to the following demonstration. A free cause, upon which depends the application of hypothetically

necessary laws and which is not restricted to laws of a certain order, can act externally. Now, God is a free and omnipotent cause, upon which depends the application of all hypothetically necessary laws which constitute the natural order of action of created agents, and the divine liberty is not restricted to this order. Therefore this cause can act externally or perform miracles.

The major of this demonstration is made clear by examples and by an analysis of the concepts.

A current example is the following: a man is free to throw a stone up in the air, and this is a suspension of the hypothetically necessary law that the stone left to itself will fall to the surface of the earth, tending toward its center. Likewise the artist produces an artistic effect beyond the natural power of the instrument which he uses. The musician elevates and animates, so to speak, the harp which he holds in his hands; manipulated by another, whatever effect this instrument would produce, there would be nothing artistic about it. Moreover, if the musician is an artist of genius, he can act beyond and above the ordinary laws of his art; then he produces a work which is not only beautiful but sublime and, as it were, a miracle in the order of art. By this fortunate exception the ordinary laws of art are neither destroyed nor contested. The only thing is that their application has been suspended.

This is also made evident by an analysis of the concepts implied in the major of our proof. If, indeed, the application of the hypothetically necessary laws depends upon a free cause, this cause enjoys in this respect *liberty of action*. If, besides this, it is not restricted to this order of laws, it thus enjoys *liberty of specification*. Therefore it can, not only suspend the action of natural laws, but act positively outside of them.

The minor of our demonstration is comprised of two parts. Beginning with the second part, that referring to the world, which

is the object of our sense experience, we shall arrive at the first, which relates to divine liberty.

The order of action of all created natures is established by hypothetically necessary laws. Hypothetical necessity is that which is based upon the extrinsic cause of a thing (efficient and final causes), in opposition to absolute necessity, which is based upon the intrinsic causes (formal and material causes). Now, the order of action of all created natures is established evidently by causal laws which have reference to efficient causality. Therefore the order of action of all created natures is established by laws which are hypothetically necessary.

For a complete understanding of this, it suffices to contrast absolute with hypothetical necessity. Absolute necessity is based upon the intrinsic causes or upon the very nature of a thing. Thus it is that a triangle of necessity has its three angles equal to two right angles by reason of its very nature. And whatever Descartes may have said, not even by performing a miracle can God make a triangle the three angles of which would not equal two right angles; for in that case the triangle would be at the same time a triangle and not a triangle. Spinoza's error consisted in trying to reduce the physical laws to mathematical laws. This necessarily led him to deny the possibility of miracles. God cannot act outside of absolutely necessary laws, such as mathematical and metaphysical laws, which are based intrinsically upon the very natures of things. On the contrary, hypothetical necessity is based upon the extrinsic causes of things. Granted that a certain agent may act, according to the natural conditions it produces of necessity a certain effect. Thus it is that fire, if it acts, burns, and does not chill. But this hypothetical law does not prevent the action from being arrested or modified by a higher law. So in reference to the final cause, man must have two eyes in order to see well. However, he does not cease to be a man if he becomes

blind in one eye or in both eyes. (See St. Thomas, *Met. Arist.*, Bk. V, ch. 5, lect. 6; and Ia, q. 19, a. 3.)

Is the order of action of all created natures established by hypothetically necessary laws? The answer is evident: since it is an order of action, it is established by causal laws which have reference to efficient causality and which express the *mode of action* of created agents. Such a natural agent, if it acts, necessarily produces this effect, but that does not exclude the possibility of the intervention of a higher agent which arrests or modifies the action of the first. We may divide natural laws into positive and negative. The former express what created nature can do if left to itself. These hypothetical laws do not exclude the intervention of a higher agent. Negative laws express what created nature, if left to itself, cannot do; for instance, nature cannot raise a dead man to life; but this hypothetical law does not make the resurrection of one from the dead absolutely impossible. Why could not God do what created powers are unable to effect?

If God intervenes by working a miracle, these hypothetically necessary laws are not destroyed nor in any way impaired. It is only their application which is suspended by a fortunate exception which proves the rule. If only God can raise a dead person to life, this proves, moreover, that nature cannot do so; and it follows that a corpse naturally putrifies. Even if God prevents the *action* of fire, the fire retains its natural *power* to burn. It is only the exercize of the power that is suspended.

The second part of the minor of our proof has reference to divine liberty. God is a free and omnipotent cause upon which depends the application of all the hypothetically necessary laws of the natural order and which is not restricted to this order.

We have already established the fact that God is free with regard to created good things, which cannot increase His infinite happiness. Therefore He is free to create and choose such or such a world rather than a certain other. He could not have

created *better,* that is, with more wisdom, but He could have made a *better* world. Thus the animal has not its parts arranged better than those of the plant, but it is a better or more perfect being. There is always an infinite difference between a creature, however perfect it may be, and the infinite goodness that it reflects; it could not exhaust the divine omnipotence.

The application of all hypothetically necessary laws is evidently dependent upon the divine liberty. For the application of these laws presupposes the presence of the action of created agents. Now, the action of every created agent depends upon the free action of the first cause, as every natural end is subordinate to the ultimate end willed by God. As the action of our hand depends upon that of our liberty, so the action of created causes depends upon that of the divine liberty.

Therefore God can act outside of and above the order of action of all created nature; He can work miracles. In an unseen manner He can prevent a natural action, for instance, that of fire. He can also produce an effect which surpasses all created powers either as to its essence (the glorification of the body), or as to the subject in which it is realized (the non-glorious resurrection), or as to the mode in which it is produced (the sudden change of water into wine).

There must be, it is true, a sufficient motive for God thus to intervene outside the natural laws. But if He, the pure Spirit, wills to manifest Himself to our souls held captive by the senses, if He wills to reveal to us a truth of salvation or the sanctity of one of His servants who will be a model for us in the practice of virtues, is not this more than a sufficient motive? All bodies are subordinated to the spirit, and the created spirit has for its end to know God. If God wills to reveal Himself to us, why could He not suspend for a moment the course of things in the sensible order? In comparison with a soul, all bodies taken together count for nothing. (See *Contra Gentes,* Bk. III, ch. xcix, *in fine.*)

Such is the Thomistic and classical demonstration of the possibility of miracles. By means of the principles we have just stated, it would be easy to solve the objections, which can readily be shown not to differ from those examined by St. Thomas in the *Summa* (Ia, q. 105, a. 6), and more at length in his *De potentia* (q. 6, a. 1).

As to the discernibility of miracles, the principles expounded in the beginning of the preceding chapter enable us to answer the current objection that, before we can affirm that an effect is by its nature miraculous or that it surpasses all created powers, we should have to know all these powers, whereas many of them remain unknown to us.

In order to discern the miraculous nature of an effect, it is not necessary for us to know all that nature can do; it suffices for us to know what it cannot do. And that we know, because we know the principal *effects which belong properly to God.*

It is metaphysically certain that God alone can produce, and consequently *immediately* modify,[103] the very being of creatures: prime matter, the human soul, the intellect, and the will. Now these immediate modifications of being or of matter are necessarily found in such great miracles as the resurrection, the sudden change of water into wine, the multiplication of the loaves. Therefore only God can be the author of these extraordinary effects.

[103] We have shown that only the proper cause of a determinate effect can modify it, for the immediate modification of a thing has a specification which is of the same order as its immediate production. Thus it is only our intellect that can immediately modify its own judgment; the imagination can modify this judgment only mediately by means of images. Likewise, created agents cannot modify the being of creatures or prime matter except through the intermediary of phenomena or of accidents. God alone has *immediate* power over the substantial being of things.

We have shown elsewhere (*Le sens commun*, pp. 91–94; *De revelatione*, II, 70–78) that common sense or natural reason grasps at once confusedly in certain miraculous effects that there is a modification of the *being* itself of things which can have only the *First Being* as its cause. That is possible because reason is a faculty the object of which is *being* and not merely phenomena.

For a full understanding of this it suffices to apply these principles to each of these facts.

Only God, who can produce by way of creation both matter and the human soul, can reunite them substantially without the accidental dispositions which are the prerequisites of generation (*De potentia,* q. 6, a. 7 ad 4um).

Only God who can produce matter, can immediately transform it, instantaneously change, for instance, water into wine, without predisposing accidental alterations, or He alone can multiply loaves of bread by an instantaneous change of the same kind (IIIa, q. 44, a. 4 ad 4um). On the other hand, a created agent can only *mediately* transform matter, by means of the accidental modifications it is able to produce in matter (Ia, q. 110, a. 2, 3, 4).

If we consider not so much the nature of the extraordinary effects but their existence, this latter is an object of physical certitude, since these are effects of the sensible order. Experience enables us to discern a true from a fictitious resurrection. The examination of the moral and religious circumstances which precede, accompany, and follow these effects, affords a confirmation which at times is indispensable for certain miracles. For instance, in the case of many cures, it would be difficult to prove metaphysically that God alone can produce them.

If a miracle, thus verified, has been given as a sign of a divine revelation, this revelation cannot be false, for God by an exceptional intervention of His liberty and omnipotence would then be confirming a lie, and He would be leading us invincibly into error. This is an absurdity, for He who is Truth itself would cease to be so.

Finally, omnipotence is not limited to miracles of the sensible order. Revelation teaches us that this omnipotence not only can in a supernatural manner restore the natural life to one who is dead, but that it can produce in our soul a *life entirely super-*

natural, which is that of grace. The least degree of grace is of more value than all miracles and all created natures combined, because it is a participation of the intimate life of God. It remains for us to say a few words about this intimate life of God, so that we may see the harmony between what reason can find out about the First Cause and what revelation alone is able to teach us about it.

53) *The Intimate Life of God: mystery of the Holy Trinity.*

We can prove by reason that there is life in God; only revelation can make known to us the profound mystery of the divine life, the mystery of the Trinity. Aristotle has shown that, although God is absolutely immutable, it is fitting for Him to have life.

In fact, the higher life does not call for motion. Motion, which presupposes imperfection and potentiality, is but an imperfection of created life which does not possess all at once the plenitude that it must have; this is especially so of that material life which is incessantly changing because it is constantly dying (assimilated and disassimilated motion).

What is absolutely essential to a living being, says St. Thomas (Ia, q. 18, a. 1, 3), is for it to have *in itself* the principle of its action, which is immanence of action; and the nearer one approaches to God, the greater is the increase of this immanence. A stone is non-living, for it has not in itself the principle of its action. The plant lives because it moves itself inasmuch as it sustains, develops, and reproduces itself, but of itself it does not determine either the form or the end of these movements. This form and this end are assigned to it by the author of its nature. An animal has a higher form of life, because it perceives by the senses the various objects toward which it can tend; and the more perfect are the senses of an animal, the more vitality it has, because it can so much the better vary its action. Life in man is

of a still higher kind, because he knows not only the objects which can specify his various movements, but also the reason of the end and is able to consider an end and see in this end the *raison d'être* of certain means which he determines for himself. Thus he is master of his action in so far as he determines it as regards its form and end. However, the human intellect needs to be moved objectively by an external truth, for it is not the supreme Being. The human will has as its ultimate end one that is external, for it is not itself the supreme Good, and both faculties in the order of efficient causes need to be premoved by the First Cause. It is the *self-subsisting Being* who is in the highest degree living, because He possesses so completely in Himself all the principles (formal, final, and efficient) of His action, that this action is His own self. It is not a case of adherence to an external truth, it is Truth itself as Thought ever in act, ever living, the Good as eternal Love. Therefore God is not only living, He is Life.

Aristotle said of pure Act: "Life also belongs to God, for the actuality of thought is life, and God is that actuality. God's self-dependent actuality is life most good and eternal: ζῶον ἀΐδιον ἄριστον. We say also that God is a living being, eternal, perfect. Life eternal, therefore, belongs to God, for this is God." (*Met.*, Bk. XII, ch. vii.)

When we say that God is immutable, we do not mean that He is therefore inert. We affirm, on the contrary, that as He is plenitude of being or pure act, He is essentially activity itself and has no need of transition to act that He may act.

It is solely by revelation that the intimate life of God can be made known to us. Reason, indeed, attains to a knowledge of God only by means of His perfections reflected in creatures, and what these perfections can tell reason about God is only what He possesses in *common* with creatures. What properly constitutes Him is naturally knowable by us merely in a *negative* way, as

when we say that He is the non-finite Being, or in a *relative* way, as when we say that He is the supreme Being or the sovereign Good. It is only divine revelation that can *positively* make known to us what properly constitutes the Deity.

It would be vain for us to try to define solely by physico-chemical laws what properly belongs to the vital phenomena of plant life, or to reduce the sensation of animal life to these latter phenomena. It would also be impossible to explain the proper activity of the intellect solely by knowledge of sense perception. For the same reason it is useless to seek to know definitely by means of creatures the intimate life of the Deity. We must distinguish, as constituting so many irreducible orders, between the mineral, vegetable, animal, and human kingdoms, and between these and the kingdom of God or the essentially supernatural order which is infinitely above all the rest.

Only revelation can make known to us the mysteries of the supernatural order. First it presents them to us obscurely when it appeals to our faith; afterwards, it will show them more clearly to us when we are raised to the beatific vision. Here on earth God alone must be our master, and it is the rule that the disciple must believe what the master says before he arrives at the certainty of evidence.

Revelation has made known to us the mystery of the intimate life of God by means of a formula that Catholics repeat several times a day when making the sign of the cross. It is the formula of Baptism by which we are made Christians. Jesus said: "Going therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 28: 19).

A superficial consideration of the mystery of the Holy Trinity makes us ask ourselves in what way this incomprehensible formula bears upon our life: only one God in three persons. What difference would it make in our life if there were but one person in God?

The mysteries of the Incarnation and the Redemption, however supernatural they may be, answer deep-felt needs in our nature. They reveal God's infinite love for us, and we have much need of feeling that we are loved by God and of hoping in Him. But how can the mystery of the Trinity enrich our faith, arouse our hope, increase our charity?

Rationalism at times reduces this dogma to a mere symbol of a truth of the natural order. Hegel in his atheistic Evolutionism considers this dogma as the fundamental law of the evolution of the universal spirit: thesis, antithesis, synthesis, to which correspond subject, object, and their union. But as a general rule Rationalism does not deign even for one moment to consider the Trinity, claiming to find in it a manifest contradiction, in that it is a negation of the unity of God and a relic of Polytheism, as if God were under the same aspect both triune and one. On the contrary, faith affirms that He is absolutely one by nature, that the divine nature is neither multiplied nor divided, and that there exist three divine persons who possess this indivisible nature. Thus the three angles of a triangle are really distinct and yet they are contained in the same plane.

A number of Protestants assign to the mystery of the Trinity but an indirect importance, by reason of its connection with the dogmas of the Incarnation in its redemptive aspect, and of the mission of the Holy Ghost, which presuppose three persons in God. It is only for guarding against any contradiction in the essential beliefs of Christianity, they say, that we must admit the mystery of the Trinity, which of itself is of no importance to us.

On the contrary, in the eyes of the Church, if this single mystery is a safeguard against contradiction in the other mysteries, this is so because it is their supreme principle, the very center of the whole faith, having for its primary object the intimate life of God. If this supreme mystery were to become evident for us, as it is for the blessed in heaven, then all the other mysteries would

be illumined from this sublime source. This mystery is the one toward which all the truths of the faith converge, the one toward which, in this mortal life, the saints in their contemplation aspire with increasing ardor.

To make evident the importance of this mystery, we will show: (1) that the revelation of the Holy Trinity confirms our natural knowledge of God and raises it to a higher plane by manifesting the infinite fecundity of the divine nature; (2) that it proposes to us the highest object of faith and of supernatural contemplation, by manifesting the intimate life of God, or the highest degree of both the intellectual life and the life of charity.

1) Reason alone suffices to make known to us God's existence and His principal attributes, such as goodness, life, wisdom, liberty, sanctity; but the intimate reconciliation of all these divine perfections remains very obscure for us.

How can there be life in unity and in absolute immutability, which seems to denote sterility? Does not life mean fecundity? If we answer that the divine fecundity is manifested by creation, a new difficulty arises. If the divine life is of necessity fecund, then creation cannot be a free act. How can the creative act be a free one? If God is infinitely good, He must of necessity be diffusive of Himself. No being which reaches perfection can be content to remain within itself in a sterile state. Fire gives out heat, the mind having come into possession of truth seeks to communicate this to others. If God were to remain shut up within Himself in a sterile state, He would be neither good nor wise, say the Pantheists. God is essentially diffusive of Himself; the universe is, as it were, the very life of God communicated externally, and creation is therefore a necessary act. This doctrine, which excludes liberty, leads us to see something divine in the worst things and in the most perverse souls.

The Church proclaims emphatically that the creative act is absolutely free. God could have chosen not to create, precisely

because He is already infinitely good in Himself, and because creation cannot increase His infinite perfection. Mortal beings feel the need of reproducing themselves, so as to perpetuate themselves and leave after them a new being that continues them. But God is eternal.

In this manner theology explains the freedom of the creative act. Yet it remains obscure. Fecundity is not merely a remedy for this transitory life of mortal beings; it is a perfection, and good naturally tends to communicate itself to others. If God had not created, how would this principle be verified in Him, namely, that it is the characteristic of good to be diffusive of itself and to give itself to others? It would seem that an infinite being must have infinite fecundity, which cannot be manifested by the creation of beings that are necessarily finite.

This obscurity is dispelled by the light thrown upon it from the dogma of the Trinity. This supreme diffusiveness of self, this infinite fecundity which must be the property of the sovereign Good, these God would possess even if He had not created. To explain the meaning of this mystery, without in any way claiming to demonstrate it, theology appropriates this principle which has been urged against it: that good is naturally diffusive of itself, that goodness essentially tends to communicate itself. Theology states the principle with exactness, develops it, and applies it to the Infinite Being.

A scientific exposition of revelation tells us in the words of St. Thomas [104] that *goodness is not only by nature diffusive of*

[104] It is especially in the *Contra Gentes* (Bk. IV, ch. xi, in the article, "How generation is to be understood in the divine Persons") that St. Thomas has developed this principle. That article is one of the most forceful treatments ever written concerning the Trinity; the more often we read it, the more we realize its depth. St. Thomas begins by the enunciation of the principle which concerns us here. He says: "To carry out this purpose we must begin by observing that, where things differ in nature, we find different modes of emanation, and further, that from the *higher nature things proceed in a more intimate way.*" St. Thomas shows the truth of this principle by going through the various grades of being and

itself, but the more perfect it is, the more abundantly and intimately it communicates itself, and the more also what proceeds from it remains closely united to it. With the Angelic Doctor as our guide, let us contemplate the truth of this principle, going through the grades of beings, starting from the inanimate, until we reach God.

The sun gives out light and heat that is beneficent, and these separate from it. Plants or animals, having reached their full growth, generate a new being. This new being leaves them and takes their place when they die. In man there is a combination of both material and spiritual fecundity. The artist who has become a master in his art, conceives in his mind a masterpiece such as a picture or a symphony. This masterpiece thus conceived and begotten is, as it were, the offspring of his mind; he cannot help loving it and he seeks his utmost to make it a reality. But this work of art is external to the thought which gave birth to it, and is not, like the thought, something vital. It is very inferior to it. The artist cannot completely realize his inmost inspiration. It is a spiritual fecundity of a very imperfect kind which does not deserve to be called generation.

A great scholar, too, through long labors of spiritual childbirth, succeeds in conceiving, in revealing the laws of nature, which sometimes are named after him. But once his thought is

applying the principle finally to God so as to throw light upon the mystery of the Trinity. Likewise, in Ia, q. 27, a. 1 ad 2um, we read: "Whatever proceeds (*from another*) . . . the more perfectly it proceeds, the more perfectly it is one with the source whence it proceeds. For it is clear that the more a thing is understood, the more closely is the intellectual conception joined and united to the intelligent agent. . . . Thus, as the divine Intelligence is the very supreme perfection of God, the divine Word is of necessity one with the Source whence He proceeds, without any kind of diversity."

So too, in explaining the fitness of the Incarnation, he says: "Essence of goodness is of the very nature of God. Hence, what belongs to the essence of goodness, befits God. *But it belongs to the essence of goodness to communicate itself to others. Hence it belongs to the essence of the highest good to communicate itself in the highest degree to the creature*" (IIIa, q. 1, a. 1).

expressed in words, it is separated from him and the written formula is but a faint reminder of the intuitive genius that the thought seeks to express. If this scholar writes about the human soul, how cold and poor his pages are, as compared with the spiritual reality they seek to reveal. The master, it is true, can leave his writings after him, and he can also train disciples. He imparts his knowledge to them and endeavors to impart something more intimate, his spirit. Seldom does he attain this end completely. A day comes when the disciples, having learned all they can from the master, leave him and go their way. It is only great intellects that have the profound and intimate mode of operation which causes their disciples to remain attached to them. The more perfect a being is, the more it gives of its inmost self and the more closely united to it is that which proceeds from it.

This law is verified in the virtuous and especially in the apostolic man who gives to others the best that is in him, his love. It is his whole soul that he wishes to bestow on others. So, too, a friend places at his friend's disposal all his property, all his faculties; it is the whole of his being that he wants to give, retaining nothing for himself, in order that he and his friend may become but one being, one mind, one will. The more perfect a being is, the more it gives of its inmost self. What must be the fecundity of the supremely perfect Being? He who is the sovereign Good, the plenitude of being, communicates Himself as fully and as intimately as it is possible for Him to do so, which means in an infinite way. He cannot generate in a material way since He is pure spirit. But is there not in Him a spiritual generation which more than anything else is entitled to be called generation?

In the spiritual order God is not content, after the manner of an artist, to reproduce His divine ideas in the world of corporeal beings. To make us His disciples, it is not enough for Him, as it is for the master, that He should communicate His ideas to us. It is not even enough for Him to have us share in His love. The

sovereign Good must give fully something still more profound than His ideas and His love. For Him to be supremely diffusive of Himself He must [105] give His intimate life, His very nature, in the ineffable mystery of His divine Paternity. "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee" (Ps. 2:7).

God gives His very nature. He generates not because of the need of substituting a new life for one which must end. He generates because of the superabundance of His infinite fecundity. It is the most absolute diffusiveness of Himself. It is also the most perfect intimacy. He does not generate, as man does, by producing a new being, external to Himself and separated from Him. In generating, He does not multiply His nature. He communicates the whole of His nature without either loss or division or multiplication of it, somewhat as we communicate an idea or a spiritual gift. It is truly the whole of Himself that He gives to His Son, reserving for Himself only His relation of Paternity. From the Father and the Son proceeds the Spirit of love who constitutes the bond of union between them. The three are one and the same God, since the divine nature is not multiplied. It is God communicating Himself in the most intimate manner, and with the most absolute diffusiveness of Himself.

The more perfect a being is, the more completely it communicates itself, and the more that which proceeds from it remains intimately united with it.

Even before God had created, it would have been true to say of Him, that the divine goodness is infinitely communicative. The sovereign Good has given Himself, and so completely and intimately that this other partial and external giving of Himself, which is creation, is infinitely inferior. This latter cannot add any

[105] This act by which God the Father generates the Son is a necessary act, as also is that act of spiration by which the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son. But this necessity is not evident for us, and what is adduced in argument is but an argument of congruity.

necessary perfection to the divine goodness and remains therefore an absolutely free act.

It is thus that the dogma of the Trinity, in spite of its obscurity, confirms what we are already able to know in a natural way about God, His goodness, His life, and the liberty of the creative act.

2) The revelation of the mystery of the Trinity not only confirms our natural knowledge of God, but it proposes to us the highest object of faith and contemplation, by manifesting to us the intimate life of God and the life both of the intellect and of charity, each in the highest degree.

Intellectual life in the case of us poor mortals, since our mind is united with the body, is something so imperfect, so deplorable at certain times, that many have despaired of reason. Great intellects remain for years in the quest of truth, and succeed passably in acquiring certain very imperfect ideas about the problems which interest us most, ideas partly erroneous, scarcely ever decisive, ideas which we must always reconsider. Our interior locution is slow in its formation; it is also fragmentary to an extraordinary degree. Our petty ideas are so numerous that sometimes they are an inextricable jumble in which we become lost. We do not succeed in classifying them, in grading them, so as to embrace them in one glance of the intellect. They are present to us as though not present; often we have eyes that we may not see, an intelligence that we may not understand. Truth, goodness, justice, charity, are words of very deep meaning, frequently uttered by us, but we have scarcely an idea of the infinite reality contained in them. We ourselves are possessed of intelligence, and we know so little as to what constitutes an intelligence.

On the other hand, revelation tells us that in God there is an eternal and unique Word, generated once and forever by the divine intellect of the Father. "In the beginning was the Word

and the Word was with God" (John 1:1). This Word is a perfect idea from the first and single instant of eternity, a definite idea, absolutely true, expressing adequately the reality of God and the infinite participations of which the Deity is capable. "The brightness of eternal light, and the unspotted mirror of God's majesty" (Wisdom 7:26). This Word, too, is "the brightness of His glory and the figure of His substance" (Heb. 1:3).

This eternal Word is not divided; He is unique and absolutely simple. In Him the Father's intelligence embraces, in one glance, His own intellect and all possible worlds, all natures and all supernatural gifts conceivable. The Father's intellect sees in the Word the final answer to the problems that philosophy and theology do not even succeed in positing. In this unique Word the Father's intelligence also actually knows the universe even in the least details, and our own selves even to the most delicate shades of our physical, intellectual, and moral temperament. This intellect beholds in the Word the ultimate mysteries as yet hidden from the blessed: our predestination and the exact number of the elect. The uncreated infinite Being and the unlimited number of our acts which will be realized in eternity, all these truths this intellect embraces in a single glance.

But there is another and more profound difference between our word and that of God. Our word, our interior locution, does not suffice for our intellectual life. We cannot converse with it, for the word is but an accident of our intelligence, a mode of our mind. Our *conception* is very imperfect. It does not succeed in generating spiritually something like to ourselves. If we speak to our word, we get no response from it. We are alone with our thoughts. We also have need of communing with other intelligences, of associating the weakness of our intellect with that of another, for the purpose of endeavoring to throw more light, if possible, upon the infinite mystery of those things which interest us most. Here new difficulties arise. How are we to communicate

to another person the inmost meaning of our thought which is often in itself somewhat obscure and does not reach the stage of full development? At times we are separated from those who, like us, are sincerely seeking the truth, from those we love, by a thick wall composed of all manner of misunderstanding.

Revelation, on the contrary, tells us that the divine Idea or the Word is not an accident, a simple mode of the divine intelligence. Like it, the Word must be substantial and consequently vital and intelligent as the divine intelligence is. Moreover, the Word is a person, because a person is an intellectual substance conscious of itself.[106] Such is the perfect intellectual *conception* which is literally a spiritual *generation*,[107] the Father generating spiritually one like to Himself in the absolutely indivisible unity of the divine nature.

We cannot converse with our thoughts. The Father can converse with His Word, receive an answer from Him, be comprehended by Him as He comprehends Him. Our thought leaves us isolated. God the Father is no longer alone, having His Word.

In order to get away from our sterile isolation we are forced to enter into relationship with other intelligences, and there are many obstacles separating us from them. The intelligence both of the Father and of the Word not only are interpenetrative in a most absolute manner, but they are the same indivisible intel-

[106] But reason, left to itself, cannot prove, even after the doctrine has been revealed, that there is in God an intellectual procession terminating in a person, the formal constituent of which is *incommunicable*, and *really distinct* from the person in opposition.

[107] John of St. Thomas (*De Trinitate*, disp. 12, a. 6, n. 15) has this to say: "The procession of the Word, by purifying the idea itself of intelligible procession from all potentiality and imperfection, because of the very property and inmost being of the intelligible procession, becomes substantial and generative. . . . But because of its defect and imperfection, the result is that it is an accidental image and only representative as in us, in whom the intelligible entity is not the substance itself of the thing, but something accidental. . . . The reason for this is based on the argument given by St. Thomas in Ia, q. 27, a. 2, and q. 27, a. 1 ad 2um.

ligence, the same act of the mind vital with the same truth. Such is the supreme degree of the intellectual life. It consists of two completely spiritual persons who live by the same truth, by one and the same act of the mind. The two persons are fully accessible to each other, and there is opposition between them only because they are mutually related to each other. The two persons essentially refer to each other, and their whole personality consists precisely in a subsistent and incommunicable relation of the one to the other. Their life is not at all one of solitude but of communicativeness in the highest degree.

But God is not only truth and intelligence, He is also goodness and love. The intimate life of God is the life of charity in its highest degree and the eminent exemplar of this life.

If we look at this life of charity in ourselves, we often find it arrested, deadened by selfishness; pride, which brings about a profound isolation in souls, separates them and at times is the cause of their spiritual death. The saints consoled themselves concerning these separations, by thinking of the intimate life of God. What do persecutions and hatreds amount to, said St. Hilary? They cannot disturb the intimacy of the divine persons, nor separate them.

The Father, indeed, does not merely contemplate in His Word the plenitude of truth contained in Him; He also loves the infinite goodness expressed by Him. Reciprocally, the substantial Word, living and intelligent, is not an intelligence which stops at the mere contemplation of the Father who generates Him. The Father is infinitely good, and the Word loves Him as He is loved by the Father. The intelligence which perceives the good and does not cause us to love it, is an accursed intelligence. "He who does not love," that is St. Theresa's definition of the devil. The Word, therefore, breathes forth love, "*Verbum spirat amorem.*" This love that the Word has for the Father is one and the same indivisible act with the love which the Father has for

the Word. This love is not only mutual but identical. This ineffable friendship of the first two persons has a terminus, just as the thought has. This terminus of their love is substantial, like the Word which is the terminus of the Father's conception. This terminus is living, intelligent, loving, like the Word, and is, therefore, like Him, a person, the spirit of the first two persons, the bond between them, and He is called the Holy Spirit.

As the Father can converse with His Word, so they both can converse with the Spirit of love. It is the supreme type of the life of charity. It consists of three totally spiritual persons who live by the same truth, by one and the same act of the mind; three persons who live by the same good, by one and the same act of love. Where do we find here the least trace of egotism? The ego is no more than a subsistent relation in respect of the one loved; He appropriates nothing more to Himself. The Father gives the whole of His nature to His Son, and the Father and the Son communicate the same to the Holy Spirit. It is only by His relation of paternity that the Father differs from the Son, and the Son differs from the Father only by His relation of sonship; and what causes them to differ, unites them by referring them essentially the one to the other The Holy Ghost does not differ from the other two persons except in that He proceeds from them. Apart from the mutual relations of opposition between the persons, everything else is common and indivisible between them.[108] The Father has nothing belonging peculiarly to Himself except His paternity which is a subsistent relation with regard to His Son. The Son has nothing belonging peculiarly to Himself except His filiation, and the Holy Spirit has only His procession which belongs properly to Him. Where do we find here the least trace of egotism? The whole egotism of the Father consists in His giving His infinitely perfect nature to His Son,

[108] "In God all things are one and the same when there is no relation of opposition to prevent this." Denzinger, 703: Council of Florence.

and retaining nothing for Himself except His relationship of paternity by which He is still essentially related to His Son. The whole egotism of the Son and that of the Holy Ghost consist in being related to each other and to the Father from whom they proceed. These three divine persons essentially related to each other constitute the eminent exemplar of the life of charity. "All My things are Thine and Thine are Mine" (John 17: 10). We find vestiges of the Trinity even in sensible things.[109] And there is in our soul, above all when it has been raised to the supernatural order, not only a vestige but an image of the Trinity.

Grace is a participation in us of the divine nature or of the intimate life of God. It follows that in the life of grace there is contained a reflection of the relations in the Trinity. By grace we are "born of God," says St. John (1: 13), and this spiritual birth bears a faint resemblance to the eternal generation of the Son.[110] Our adoptive sonship is in its supernatural reality a reflection of the sonship of the Word. God has not communicated to us the whole of His nature, but a participation of it. And as the Word reverts to His Father in order to love Him, so the main duty of all "those who are born of God" by grace, is to love God, and their charity bears a faint resemblance to the Spirit of love who unites the Father and the Son.

[109] Among sensible signs of the Trinity the most common one is that of the equilateral triangle. The three angles of the equilateral triangle are: (1) *really distinct;* (2) they are, however, of the same nature and formed *by the same surface* which belongs entirely to each, as if each were in sole possession of it; (3) they are *equal* to each other; (4) they are *essentially related* to each other and are distinct from each other precisely because of this relation of opposition inherent in this very surface; (5) it suffices to examine one of them so as to enable us to know the magnitude and position of the others. The base angles are determined by the angle at the apex, and it is what it is, only if they are what they are; (6) between these three angles there is an *order,* but not a priority of causality. The first having been formed, the others proceed from it without having been caused by it, and they are in no way less perfect than it. The triangle is an infinitely faint symbol of the Holy Trinity.

[110] "Adoptive sonship is a certain participation of natural sonship" (IIIa, q. 3, a. 5 ad 2um).

The more this life of grace increases in the soul, the more there appears in it the image of the Trinity. Our soul is an image of the Trinity by reason of its being a spiritual substance, and because of the two faculties, intellect and will, which proceed from it. The image becomes the more distinct in proportion as our soul lives more in accordance with the thought and the love of God. The unitive life of a sanctified soul, that almost continuous union with God, constitutes in this world the most perfect image of the Trinity. It is supreme spiritual fecundity and perfect intimacy. In this soul God the Father is present together with the Word and the Spirit of love. In the obscurity of faith, the soul which has been supernaturalized is made conformable by the Holy Spirit, to the image of the Word who is the splendor of the Father. It is a child of God before being finally admitted to enjoy Him in the glory of the beatific vision. "And the glory which Thou hast given me, I have given to them: that they may be one, as we are one" (John 17:22).

Such is the harmony prevailing between this incomprehensible mystery and the truths which our reason is able of itself to discover. We must not think, as the Semi-Rationalists and Rosmini did, that this harmony can attain the force of a demonstration. Rosmini was condemned for claiming that an indirect demonstration of the Trinity can be given, and for upholding that reality, ideality, and morality in God can be conceived only as persons (Denzinger, nn. 1915, 1916). The Vatican Council states precisely what reason can and cannot do (Denzinger, n. 1796). Illumined by faith, reason can, indeed, says the Council, acquire a certain and very beneficial knowledge of the supernatural mysteries; that is the province of theology. But it can never succeed in demonstrating these mysteries, nor in tracing them back to rational principles: for the mysteries of the intimate life of God are of another order, entirely supernatural.

We must now return to the divine perfections which can be

known by the natural power of reason. We deduced them successively from the idea of the self-subsisting Being. It remains for us to consider them in their ensemble, so as to see how they can be reconciled. Agnosticism claims, indeed, that our conclusion is of no value, because it ends in positing perfections which are irreconcilable with one another. In other words it ends in antinomies. The rest of this book will be concerned with the presentation and solution of these antinomies.

CHAPTER III

Reconciliation of the Divine Attributes: their Formal Existence and their Identification in the Eminence of the Deity

ARTICLE I

THE APPARENT ANTINOMIES

Having determined (nn. 42–44) what finally constitutes the divine nature, and having deduced the divine attributes, we must solve the antinomies which Agnosticism brings against us, when it declares that the divine attributes cannot be reconciled with one another.

It does not seem possible that the absolute perfections can be predicated formally of God, so the Agnostics say, without at once causing contradictions to arise: first of all the contradiction of the general antinomy of the one and the multiple. The multiplicity of the absolute perfections predicated of God not only virtually, inasmuch as He can produce them, but formally, inasmuch as He possesses them, seems to destroy the divine simplicity, or stated inversely, seems to be destroyed by this multiplicity.

In other words, if God is absolutely simple, it cannot be said of Him that He is formally intelligent, formally free, for there would be in Him a plurality of formalities. We must be content to say that He is virtually intelligent, virtually free, that is, He is able to produce intelligence and freedom in us. But, as He can produce bodies, He is for the same reason corporeal. Thus the

divine simplicity seems to lead to Agnosticism. We can no longer affirm anything formally of God; or, if we wish to avoid Agnosticism, we must deny, so it seems, the absolute simplicity of the Deity.

To this basic antinomy others are added, especially those refering to freedom. How can we reconcile: (1) freedom in God according to His good pleasure, which seems to be something quite arbitrary, with His infinite wisdom? (2) Does not God's free act conflict with His immutability, and how is it this act does not posit in God something contingent and subject to defect, which could not belong to Him? (3) How are we to reconcile human free will with God's universal causality? (4) This same causality and the presence of moral evil; the permission of evil in view of God's supreme goodness and omnipotence; His avenging justice and infinite mercy; how are these to be reconciled?

Finally, there are other antinomies not so apparent, such as that of the divine simplicity and the duality of subject and object which are essential for knowledge. Then there is the antinomy of God's absolute immutability and the divine life, which seems to imply a becoming.

We shall return only by way of brief comment to the solution of these last two antinomies, since we dealt fully with them when we were discussing the divine wisdom and life (nn. 49a, 53).

The special antinomies which concern liberty, we will treat at length in chapter four. But first it is expedient for us to examine the fundamental antinomy advanced against us. In the recent writings on this subject the doctrine of St. Thomas has been more or less misrepresented and made beyond measure to agree with that of Maimonides. We will show that the *absolute perfections, instead of being mutually destructive in becoming identified in the eminence of the Deity, necessarily tend toward*

this identification; and it is the only way by which they can exist in their pure state. Thus infinite mercy and justice, far from destroying each other in becoming united in the Passion of our Lord, have found in this very union the realization of their supreme needs and the highest degree of their manifestation. Thus the most ardent charity and the most uncompromising doctrine, do not destroy each other by being united in the life of the Catholic Church; in fact, they can subsist only by means of this union. Separated from each other, they die and are no more than two corpses in a state of decomposition. On the one hand, we have humanitarian liberalism with its false serenity, and, on the other hand, fanaticism with its false zeal. The questions of life which cause the greatest divisions between persons would be clarified by a very pure and prominent light, if we gave more consideration to the fact that in God the absolute perfections, those between which there seems to be the most opposition, far from destroying each other by becoming identified in the Deity, cannot exist in their pure state except by means of this identification. It is their formal distinction that would destroy them, leaving nothing else in their place but false absolutes, false divine attributes, false divine virtues which would become so many false gods. A *cumulus* of perfections cannot constitute perfection itself.

An eminent master of the spiritual life says: "Concerning God's moral attributes, it is easy to be mistaken, especially concerning those which are, as it were, at the opposite poles of human morality: holiness and justice, on the one hand; goodness, love, and mercy, on the other. An error in this matter may have the most disastrous consequences as far as conduct and salvation are concerned." [1]

The solution of the general antinomy brought against us will

[1] Gay, *De la vie et des vertues chrétiennes,* chapter on "faith."

cast a new light on the relations between the divine attributes, especially on the relations between intelligence and will, immutability and liberty, and between justice and mercy.

That we may proceed in an orderly manner in this first article, we will give our attention: (1) to the general antinomy which is one of the principal objections of the Agnostics; (2) to the indirect solution of this antinomy and to the direct cause of the mystery. In the second article we will give the explanation concerning the philosophical mystery that underlies the identification of the absolute perfections in God. Finally, in the next chapter we will take up the solution of the special antinomies concerning liberty.

54) *The General Antinomy*

This so-called antinomy which is brought up so much against us by modern Agnostics has been presented by St. Thomas in various ways under the form of objections. They are the objections of Maimonides and the Nominalists of the Middle Ages. For instance, in the *Theological Summa* (Ia, q. 13, a. 4), the first objection is as follows: "It seems that the divine names are synonymous and that there is only a nominal distinction between them, since they express absolutely the same reality." Similarly the second objection reads: "If it be said these names signify one and the same thing in reality, but differ in idea, it can be objected that an idea to which no reality corresponds is a vain notion. Therefore, if these ideas attributed to God are many, and the divine reality is one absolutely, it seems also that all these ideas are vain notions," or at least they do not signify a perfection which is formally in God. The third objection is still more insistent: "God is supremely one. Now a thing which is one in reality and in idea (*re et ratione*), is more one than what is one in reality and many in idea (*re et non ratione*). Therefore the names applied to God do not signify different ideas."

To give greater prominence to this fundamental difficulty, let us examine the two solutions in opposition to the Thomist solution, one of them being that given by Maimonides and the Nominalists, the other being the solution by Scotus and the extreme realists. We shall thus bring out better the exact meaning and scope of the Thomistic solution which we wish to explain and defend.

Maimonides sacrificed the formal attribution of the absolute perfections in order to safeguard the absolute simplicity of God. Goodness and wisdom, he said, are only *virtually* (causally) in God, inasmuch as He can produce them. They are not contained formally in God. This is tantamount to saying, replies St. Thomas, that nothing applies analogically to God and to creatures, but merely in a purely *equivocal* way: "Some have said that nothing is predicated analogically of God and the creature, but *purely in an equivocal sense.* And this is the opinion of Rabbi Moyses, as is evident from his statements" (*De potentia,* q. 7, a. 7). This being so, adds St. Thomas, corporeity which is found virtually in God inasmuch as He can be the cause of it, is there on the same grounds as spirituality. Hence it ought to be equally right for us to say that God is absolutely unknowable (Ia, q. 13, a. 2). Is not this Agnosticism? [2] The *Nominalists* have followed along the same lines and declared that all the divine names are synonymous. They maintain that, between divine justice and mercy, there is only a verbal distinction, as between Tullius and Cicero, or a *distinctio rationis ratiocinantis,* that is, *a purely mental distinction,* purely subjective, without any real foundation, as between Cicero the subject and Cicero the predicate in the sentence, "Cicero is

[2] We have shown (n. 28) that St. Thomas declares the opinion of Maimonides *to be contrary to the faith* (*De potentia,* q. 7, a. 5; and Ia, q. 13, a. 2, 5). He says further that it would also destroy all knowledge of God acquired by reasoning. "Our knowledge of God would consist of empty words, and every demonstration concerning Him would be sophistical on account of the fallacy of equivocation" (*De potentia,* q. 7, a. 7; and Ia, q. 13, a. 3, 5).

Cicero." Why not say then: God pardons by means of His justice and punishes by means of His mercy? In Him contradictories are verified. This explains why the Nominalists were expelled, for this doctrine, from the University of Paris and from various other universities, as Billuart relates.[3]

Duns Scotus thought it necessary, in order to avoid the Agnosticism of the Nominalists, to posit in God an actually formal multiplicity, by admitting between the divine attributes an *actually formal distinction* previous to any consideration of the mind (*distinctio formalis ex natura rei,* a formal distinction on the part of the thing).[4] This, according to the Thomists, is irreconcilable with God's absolute simplicity, and seems to be the beginning of anthropomorphism, reminding one of the *exaggerated realism* of Gilbert de la Porrée, which was condemned at the Council of Reims[5] (1148). Whereas Maimonides reduces analogy to equivocation, Scotus, on the contrary, brings it so close to univocation as to say that "being," predicated commonly of God and creatures, is univocal.[6]

[3] Billuart, *Cursus theologiae juxta mentem D. Thomae, de Deo,* dissert. II, a. 3, sec. 11.

[4] Scotus, *Oxon.,* I, d. 2, q. 7, sec. *sed hic restat;* dist. 8, q. 4; *"Whether there is in God a distinction of the essential perfections in some way previous to any act of the intellect."* Scotus replies in the affirmative against St. Thomas. Cf. Cajetan, on Ia, q. 13, a. 5, 12; q. 39, a. 1. See also art. "Duns Scotus" in the *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique,* col. 1876.

[5] Denzinger, 389. Gilbert de la Porrée admitted between God and the Deity, and perhaps between the attributes, *a certain real distinction.* Petavius, Vasquez, and some others maintain that the distinction admitted by Gilbert and condemned by the Council, was not a real and absolute distinction, but merely an actually formal distinction which differs scarcely or not at all from that of Scotus. On the contrary, the Scotists and some other theologians maintain that it was a real and absolute distinction which was condemned. See Billuart, *loc. cit.*

[6] Scotus, *Oxon.,* I, d. 3, q. 2, n. 5, says: "Not asserting the latter, because *contrary to the commonly accepted opinion,* we may say that, not only do we conceive of God by means of a concept which is analogous to that of the creature, which, of course, denotes something entirely different from that which is said of the creature, but we conceive of God by means of a concept which is in some way

The advocates of either of these extreme solutions do not admit the possibility of a third solution. The Agnostics say with Maimonides that, if in God there is only a virtual distinction between the absolute perfections, as the Thomists and we affirm, then these perfections are not contained formally in Him; there is only one eminent formality in Him, the Deity, which is unknowable. The Scotists concede this and in their turn say that, if the absolute perfections are contained formally in God and not merely virtually, as in the case of the mixed perfections, then

univocal as regards Him and the creature. And that there may be no dispute concerning the term 'univocation,' I speak of a univocal concept which is one in such a way that its unity suffices for contradiction, by affirming and denying it of the same thing. It also suffices as the middle term in the syllogism, so that we may conclude that the extremes, united in the middle term which is thus one, without fallacy of equivocation, are themselves one. And I give three proofs of univocation understood in this sense." St. Thomas and his school (see Cajetan, on Ia, q. 13, a. 5; *De analogia nominum*, ch. x) having always claimed, following Aristotle (II *Post. Anal.*, chs. xiii, xiv), that unity of proportion in the analogous concept suffices for the employment of this concept as a middle term. It is this which Scotus here denies. It is clear that the Subtle Doctor on this main point takes a stand different from that of St. Thomas. See also *Oxon.*, I, d. 3, q. 3, n. 6; d. 8, q. 3, n. 16. It is useless for one to strive to reduce this opposition to a question of terminology. The Scotist, H. de Montefortino, who compiled from the teaching and text of Scotus a theological *Summa* in which the division into questions and articles corresponds to that made by St. Thomas, always takes the opposite view to that of the Thomists when it is a question of analogy. It is thus that he concludes in his Ia, q. 4, a. 3, when he says: "I reply by saying that every creature is *like* to God in all those predications which apply *univocally* to both. But these are the concept of *being* as well as all those *pure perfections* found in creatures." Cf. *Oxon.*, I, d. 3, q. 2, n. 10. The conclusion is the same in Ia, q. 13, a. 5: "The names of *pure perfections* which are predicated of God and creatures, are predicated *univocally* of them, and they denote the same real concept." In this last mentioned article, Montefortino presents the Thomist doctrine on analogy in the form of objections which are solved by the teaching of Scotus in the passages just quoted. The Scotist arguments against analogy and in favor of univocation are refuted by Cajetan in his commentary on Ia, q. 13, a. 5, and more at length in his commentary on the *De ente et essentia* of St. Thomas, and in his treatise *De analogia nominum*, ch. iv. *Capreolus*, in his commentary on III Sent., dist. 5, q. 3, sec. 1 ad 11um, after declaring the *falsity* of this proposition of Scotus, namely, that being is predicated univocally of God and creatures, points out that a Pantheistic conclusion can be drawn from it. We shall speak of this again further on.

we must say, of course, that there is an actually formal distinction between them previous to the mind's consideration of them. In other words, we must acknowledge the presence of an actually formal multiplicity in God.

The Thomists have replied that there is a third solution, superior to the other two.[7] They have not always been understood, and their doctrine has sometimes been distorted.

[7] They discuss this problem either in their commentaries on the *Summa* (Ia, q. 13, a. 5), as Cajetan had done, or in the commentaries on the *Contra Gentes* (chs. xxii, xxiii, xxiv), as Ferrariensis has done, or they discuss it at the end of their treatises on God, after giving the proofs for His existence, as John of St. Thomas does in his *Cursus theologicus, de Deo,* dissert. II, a. 3. For the exact definition of real distinctions, virtual and actually formal, consult especially this latter work.

Among the texts of St. Thomas which positively state the thesis maintained by the Thomists, it suffices to quote three. (1) Against Agnosticism, St. Thomas affirms that absolute perfections are contained *formally* in God: "As to the name applied to God, there are two things to be considered, namely, *the perfections which they signify,* such as goodness, life, and the like, and *their mode of signification.* As regards *what is signified by these names, they belong properly to God, and more properly than to creatures, and are applied primarily to Him.* But as regards their mode of signification, they do not properly and strictly apply to God." Ia, q. 13, a. 3. (2) St. Thomas maintains the absolute simplicity of the divine essence, in which there is not, according to him, any ground for distinction previous to the consideration of the mind. "The perfect unity of God requires that what are manifold and divided in others should exist in Him *simply and unitedly.* Thus it comes about that He is one in reality, yet multiple in idea, *because* our intellect apprehends Him *in a manifold manner, as things represent Him.*" Ia, q. 13, a. 4 ad 3um. (3) In Ia, q. 13, a. 12, we read: "God, however, as considered in Himself, is *altogether one and simple;* yet our intellect knows Him by *different conceptions because it cannot see Him as He is in Himself.*" He says the same in I Sent., dist. 2, q. 1, a. 3, ■ text which we quoted in n. 42, *supra.* If we had an immediate knowledge of God, we would see no distinction in His essence previous to the consideration of the mind. It is on this that Cajetan insists in his commentary on the *Summa,* Ia, q. 13, a. 12, as follows: "Observe, O Thomist, that from this you have it made plain to you that, according to St. Thomas, there is only one formal, sublime, all-comprehensive concept corresponding to God." Also in Cajetan's commentary on Ia, q. 13, a. 5, n. 7, we read: "Thus the formal concepts of wisdom and justice *are raised to a formal concept of a higher order, to the formal concept,* namely, of the *Deity,* and constitute numerically one formal concept which contains *eminently* each concept, *though not virtually,* as the concept of light includes the concept of heat, but *formally,* as the concept of light includes the concept of the power of calefaction." See also Cajetan on Ia, q. 39, a. 1, n. 7, a passage quoted *supra,* in n. 42.

In our days, certain writers have, at times, drawn so close a comparison between the Thomistic doctrine on analogy and the Agnosticism of Maimonides as to see between the two only a difference in the manner of presentation.[8] In these statements of the mind of St. Thomas, the absolute perfections (*simpliciter simplices*) seem no longer to exist *formally* in God but only *virtually*, after the manner of mixed perfections. And, as it cannot be said of God that He is an animal or a body, because animality and coporeity are only virtually contained in Him, it seemed impossible to say truly of God that He is good, wise, etc., because these absolute perfections seemed *to destroy one another by becoming identified in the eminence of the Deity.* Even to the present day the Thomists have said, presenting again the teaching of their master (Ia, q. 13, a. 2, 3, 5), that "the absolute perfections are in God not merely virtually, but *formally* and *eminently* (*formaliter eminenter*)." These writers seem to have had in mind only the second part of the formula, the word *"eminenter,"* which Agnosticism accepts without any difficulty.

On the other hand, some adversaries of this interpretation have at times defended the formal existence of the absolute perfections in God without sufficiently insisting upon the absolute and eminent simplicity of the divine essence. These latter, in their explanation of the ordinary formula of the Thomists, insisted by all means upon the word *"formaliter"* even to the point of seeming to *posit a formally real multiplicity in God,* as was the case with Duns Scotus. In order to avoid Agnosticism, this meant turning toward an anthropomorphism utterly irreconciliable with the perfect simplicity of the Deity.

We would like to show how the Thomist doctrine on *analogy* avoids Agnosticism without falling into the error of anthro-

[8] See Father Chossat, art. "Agnosticisme" in the *Dictionnaire apologétique de la foi catholique,* col. 38, 66. This article is a discussion of the principal errors of our times on this point.

pomorphism, and how it constitutes the exact mean between the equivocation of Maimonides and the univocation of Scotus.

This solution, superior to the other two solutions, is the one given by *moderate realism,* which steers a middle course between Nominalism and extreme realism. It is expressed as follows: Absolute perfections are contained *formally and eminently* in God, and yet they are only virtually distinguished from each other. They are contained *formally,* which means according to their formal concept; they are contained *eminently,* which means according to a mode infinitely above the created mode. It is only in a negative and relative way that this mode can be known by us, and this allows of their being identified without destroying one another, in the formal concept of the Deity. Thus, the absolute perfections are contained formally in God and yet are only virtually[9] distinguished from one another, or, in other words, according to a reasoned-out distinction for which there is a foundation, but consequent to the consideration of the mind. The foundation of this distinction is twofold. (1) The eminence of the Deity which can identify in itself perfections that are really distinct in creatures; (2) the imperfection of our mind which cannot attain to the absolute simplicity of God.[10]

And again, as we pointed out (n. 42), this virtual distinction is less than the distinction in creatures between the genus and the

[9] *The virtual distinction* is a logical distinction, and refers to objective concepts which are identical in the object in which the distinction is made, but which are made really different in other objects of a lower order. Thus it is that we distinguish virtually in the substance of the human soul, the sensitive principle which beasts have, from the intellectual principle which beasts do not have.

[10] St. Thomas, in I Sent., d. 2, q. 1, a. 3, says: "That God surpasses our intellect is, *on the part of God,* on account of the *plenitude* of His perfection and, *on the part of our intellect, because it fails to comprehend this.* Hence it is evident that the plurality of these concepts arises not only on account of our intellect, but also on account of God, inasmuch as His perfection exceeds any concept whatever of our intellect. And therefore, to the plurality of these concepts there corresponds something in the object, which is God, not indeed a plurality of the object, but a fulness of perfection, from which it comes about that all these concepts are applied to it."

specific difference, as we find in man, for instance, between animality and rationality. We have sound reasons for conceiving genus as potential and imperfect, and the difference as a perfection extrinsic to it, which is superadded to it and determines it. But in God there is no foundation for such a distinction. We have no right to conceive of a divine perfection as potential, imperfect, determined by another perfection extrinsic to it. God is pure Act, and there is nothing potential in Him. Consequently, according to our imperfect mode of knowing the divine attributes, a mode, however, for which there is a real foundation, these attributes must be conceived not as extrinsic to one another but as *actually* and *implicitly* though not *explicitly* including one another. This would bring us back to the purely verbal distinction of the Nominalists.[11]

It is the least conceivable of virtual distinctions: and yet it is true to say, according to the Thomists, that the absolute perfections thus really identified in the eminence of the Deity are contained formally in God, and not merely virtually like the mixed perfections.[12]

This identification, they add, is not absurd but mysterious. It constitutes a philosophical mystery, the existence of which we can truly demonstrate independently of revelation, and in this it differs from a supernatural mystery like that of the Trinity; but by reason alone we cannot positively know in what this identification *essentially* consists. Apart from the beatific vision,

[11] See Billuart, *De Deo*, diss. II, a. 2, sec. 3. It is the common teaching of the Thomists and of the greater number of theologians. See also John of St. Thomas, Gonet, Gotti, and others, at the beginning of their treatises on God.

[12] Of late years, among those who sought to explain the mind of St. Thomas, some, on the pretext that he admits only a *virtual distinction* between the attributes, seem to conclude that, according to him, the absolute perfections are contained only *virtually* in God. This would reduce the doctrine of St. Thomas to the Agnosticism of Maimonides which St. Thomas declared to be "contrary to the tenets of the saints and the prophets, when speaking of God" (*De potentia*, q. 7, a. 5, 7).

the essence of this identification of the divine attributes can be known by us only negatively and relatively. This mystery, however, is explained inasmuch as it is shown that the absolute perfections, in proportion as they are purified from all imperfection, tend toward identification. This identification toward which they tend, far from destroying them, must constitute them in their pure state.

If this Thomistic solution seems inadmissible to our adversaries, the Agnostics and the Scotists, if the reunion of the two terms *formaliter eminenter,* according to the explanation just given, seems to them a contradiction and not a mystery, it is because the contrary tenets of these two latter schools proceed from an *equal misunderstanding of the profound and even infinite difference separating analogy from univocation. In the main, although the Agnostics end in equivocation, they begin as the Scotists do, by considering the absolute perfections as being univocal.* For both, the notions of being, goodness, intelligence, are endowed with absolute unity. The Agnostics conclude from this, therefore, that these perfections are not formally in God, for they would be distinct in Him as they are in creatures, and this is contrary to the divine simplicity. And since they fail to understand what causes analogy to differ from univocation, the Agnostics thus fall into equivocation, this being the charge made by St. Thomas against Maimonides (*De potentia,* q. 7, a. 7), and the result is that God is for them unknowable. On the other hand, the Scotists conclude that for these perfections to be contained formally in God, they must be distinguished in Him even in an actually formal manner, and this previous to any consideration of the mind.

That we may show that the problem admits of a better solution and that it is not absurd for the absolute perfections to be identified in the formal concept of the Deity without destroying one another, we must above all set forth clearly how infinite is the

difference separating the analogous perfection from one that is univocal, since it is this which our adversaries fail to grasp. This will be the relative and inadequate explanation of the philosophical mystery of the identification of the divine attributes. But first we must prove indirectly that there is in this identification a mystery and not a contradiction. This proof is the indirect solution of the general antinomy and the principle for the solution of the others.

55) *The Indirect Solution of the Antinomies and the Affirmed Cause of the Mystery*

The antinomies which the Agnostics bring up against us must be merely apparent ones. We prove this by the following syllogism, which has the force of an indirect demonstration, or one by the method of reduction to absurdity.

The necessary and strict application of ideas and first principles of reason, as explained by us when we were defending the ontological and transcendent validity of these ideas and principles, *cannot* result in confronting us with real antinomies, but only with obscurities or incomprehensible mysteries; moreover, it *must* finally bring us to mysteries.

Now the necessary and strict application of ideas and first principles of reason leads us to admit the existence of a first and absolutely simple cause, one possessing formally the various absolute perfections of being—intelligence, goodness, freedom, etc. —which have been communicated by it to created beings. Therefore, in the reconciliation and identification of these various perfections in God, there cannot be a real antinomy, but only a mystery.

The minor of this argument was established in the chapter on the demonstrability of God's existence. It was afterwards confirmed by the proofs of His existence and in the deduction of the divine attributes. We have shown that each of these attributes is

a perfection without any trace of imperfection. But nothing except an imperfection is repugnant to the supremely perfect Being.

As for the major, the first part of it must be accepted, or else with Hegel we must declare that reality is thoroughly absurd, and that absurdity is at the root of all things. If, indeed, the object of reason and of experience brings us to a real antinomy, that is because the fundamental reality would itself be contradictory. Some Rationalists preferred to admit this on the authority of Hegel, rather than acknowledge, by submitting to the authority both of reason and of God, that it is a question of incomprehensible mysteries. One could not have a better proof of the unreasonableness of Rationalism. It is the crudest illustration of the vice which is opposed to wisdom and which is called spiritual folly, *stultitia* in the Scriptural and theological sense of the term. Wisdom judges of all things with reference to God; spiritual folly takes what is least in reality, what is becoming and as yet is not a reality, as its standard in judging of all things, even of God. To declare that what is becoming and as yet is not a reality is sufficient for itself and is none other than God, the Being *par excellence,* is to identify non-being with being, to avow that contradiction is the principle of all things, and it furnishes the most decisive proof by the method of absurdity of the existence of the true God, since His existence cannot be denied without ending in systematic absurdity.

If reality is not fundamentally contradictory, the necessary application of ideas and first principles cannot result in real antinomies, but *must* of necessity make us acknowledge that there are obscurities or mysteries. Thus reason must of necessity come to recognize that, in the compossibility and identification [13] of the various attributes, there is involved a philosophical mystery.

[13] Compossibility or *reconciliation* has the same meaning here as *real identification;* for, among all the attributes which must be reconciled, there is the absolute simplicity or identity of God, with which the other attributes cannot be reconciled except by being really identified with it.

Reason is forced to conclude the *fact* of this identification, the *essence* (or *mode*) of which is mysterious, and is not naturally knowable except in a negative and relative way, contrasted with what we see in creatures. For a definite and clear knowledge of this mode of identification, we should have to know God precisely in what properly constitutes Him (*Deus sub ratione Deitatis*), and not merely in what He has analogically in common with creatures; we should have to see the divine essence such as it is in itself. To have *intrinsic* evidence of the intimate reconciliation of the divine attributes, we should have to see them identified in the essence which we conceive as their principle.

It is precisely because we wish to see all the obscurities cleared up which have been left by natural theology with regard to the compossibility of the various divine attributes, that we naturally desire, though conditionally and inefficaciously, to see the essence of God which is the principle of these attributes.[14] We cannot desire *naturally* to see the divine essence according as it is the principle of the processions in the Trinity and of the order of grace, for a natural desire cannot have a *formally* supernatural object. But we can have a natural velleity of seeing the divine essence as the principle of the naturally knowable attributes, the reconciliation between which we would like to perceive clearly. The divine essence, since it is thus not considered in a formally supernatural manner, can be the object of an inefficacious natural desire, but not of an intuitive natural vision. We can know in a natural way *that it is* (*quia est*) and desire it, but we cannot positively know *what it is,* what properly constitutes it (*quid est*). Evidently it exceeds the natural means of knowing at the disposal of a created intelligence. That these means may be proportionate to this intelligence, they cannot themselves be other than created (Ia, q. 12, a. 4).

[14] Cf. St. Thomas, *Contra Gentes,* Bk. III, ch. li; Ferrariensis Comment. and Ia, q. 12, a. 1.

So long as we have not the supernatural intuitive vision of God, we cannot have *intrinsic* evidence of the philosophical mystery underlying the intimate reconciliation and identification of the divine attributes, but we can have *extrinsic* evidence of it, since we are necessarily led to admit the existence of this mystery by the legitimate and rigorous application of the first principles of reason. This indirect demonstration does not enable us to see *how* the divine simplicity and the formal existence of the diverse absolute perfections are reconciled in God, but it establishes the *fact* of this reconciliation without which reality itself would be absurd. On the one hand, it is certain that God is absolutely simple; on the other hand, that He possesses a plurality of attributes (being, goodness, intelligence). We arrived at these conclusions by legitimate and rigorous logical processes. They cannot, therefore, be in contradiction to one another. Let us hold the two ends of the chain.

The same holds good for the reconciliation of divine immutability with divine freedom, of justice with mercy, etc., or again for the reconciliation of the divine premotion, necessary that every created agent may act, with the fact of the freedom of our will.

But human reason is not reduced to this simple indirect demonstration and to this extrinsic evidence concerning the identification of the divine attributes which the Agnostics reproach us with. It can achieve still more. Without arriving at intrinsic evidence it can, to a certain extent, explain the mystery, the existence of which we have just acknowledged.

ARTICLE II

EXPLANATION REGARDING THE PHILOSOPHICAL MYSTERY IN THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE ABSOLUTE PERFECTIONS OF GOD

This explanation will consist of two parts. Since our opponents, the Nominalistic Agnostics and the Scotists, reject our solution, because both fail to recognize the infinite difference there is between an analogous and a univocal perfection, it is this difference that we will point out first of all, by proving there is no repugnance for the same analogous perfection to be found *formally* in two analogates which infinitely differ from each other by their mode or manner of being. That is what our opponents fail to see, because they view the absolute perfections univocally.

Secondly, we will show that the different absolute and analogous perfections, in proportion as they are purified from all imperfection, tend to become identified and that they tend to this by their own properties (*ex propriis*), according to the peculiar exigencies of each and not merely by what they have in common (*ex communibus*), according to the common exigencies of the divine simplicity. Hence it follows that this mysterious identification to which they thus formally tend, far from destroying them, must constitute them in a pure state, a state which cannot be known by us in this life except in a negative and relative way.

Thirdly, we will point out the difficulties which the Scotist and Suarezian concepts of the divine names leave unsolved.

56) *There is no repugnance for the same analogous perfection to be found formally in two analogates which differ infinitely from each other by their mode or manner of being.*

This proposition is denied by Agnostics, such as Maimonides. According to them, one and the same perfection cannot be found

formally in God and in creatures. If it is found formally in created beings, it can be only virtually in God. Scotus admits that one and the same absolute perfection can exist formally in God and creatures, but he fails to note the infinite diversity of the modes or manners of being, claiming that neither the divine nor the created mode allows of the real and formal identification of the attributes; in God as in creatures, there is an actually formal distinction. The reason for this is because Scotus, as well as Maimonides, assigns to the primary ideas (of being, goodness, etc.) an *absolute unity*. Being which is common to God and creatures would be *absolutely one*.

For the Thomists, on the contrary, the mental and the objective concepts [1] of an absolute and analogous perfection have but a *unity of proportionality*.[2] Besides, since this perfection implies no imperfection, there is nothing repugnant in the idea of its existing according to an infinite and sovereignly perfect mode. It follows that this perfection, thanks to its unity of proportionality, can exist *formally* in two analogates which infinitely differ from each other by their mode of being.

We have proved at length (cf. *supra*, nn. 29, 45) that it is not repugnant for the absolute perfections to exist according to an infinite mode. What is of importance for us to prove here is that their unity is but a unity of proportionality.

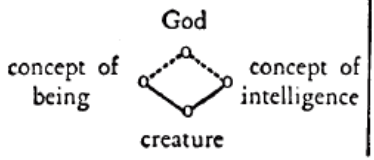
We may symbolize schematically a concept which denotes absolute unity by the figure 0, and one which denotes unity of proportion by the figure 8. The three confronting systems may then be represented as follows:

[1] The objective concept is the object which corresponds to our mental concept.

[2] Cf. Cajetan, *De analogia nominum*, chs. iv and vi; John of St. Thomas, *Cursus philosophicus*, q. 13, a. 5; *De potentia*, q. 7, a. 7; Ia, q. 13, a. 5, both of St. Thomas. Also *De veritate*, q. 2, a. 11. Consult the general index of the works of St. Thomas under the words "*analogia*" and "*proportio*." We will quote, however, the principal texts of St. Thomas.

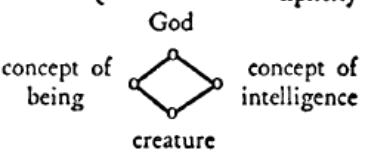
Nominalistic Agnosticism of Maimonides (equivocation)

God { absolutely simple but unknowable



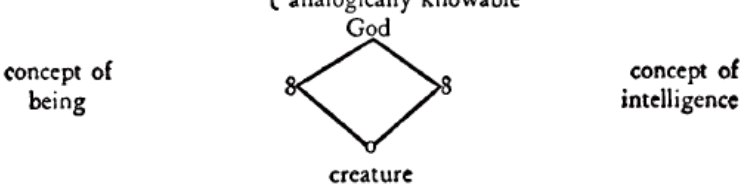
Extreme formalism or realism of Scotus (univocation)

God { knowable, but in Him actually formal multiplicity



Moderate realism of St. Thomas (analogy).

God { absolutely simple and analogically knowable



To establish the truth of our proposition, we must show that the concept (either mental or objective) of an absolute and analogous perfection has but ▪ unity of proportion, and this permits these perfections to exist formally according to infinitely diverse modes. We will show this: (*a*) indirectly, by contrasting it with the unity demanded by univocal perfection; (*b*) directly for being and its transcendental properties; (*c*) for every absolute analogous perfection.

a) Under pain of identifying the nature of the analogous concept with that of univocal concept, we must recognize that the definition is not the same. The univocal concept is essentially that concept which expresses a perfection found in the same way in

many beings, a perfection denoting *absolute unity,* which can be *perfectly abstracted* (*praescindit perfecte*) from the beings in which it is realized, such as genus (animality) or a species (humanity). Therefore the analogous concept cannot possess this same absolute unity.

The minor of this argument is self-evident if we consider that a genus (animality) designates absolutely the same thing in many species, because in each it is differentiated by specific differences *extrinsic* to it and it preserves its unity under these differences superadded to it. Animal denotes, in man as in the dog, a body endowed with sensitive life. It is the same with the species as regards the individualizing conditions; human nature is the same in all men. If the concept of an analogous perfection differs radically from the univocal concept, it could not have this absolute unity.

The Thomists,[3] using the very terms of St. Thomas (Ia, q. 13, a. 5), express this doctrine as follows: Things that are *univocal* (συνώνυμα) [4] are those which have the same name and the essence of which signified by this name is simply the same (*simpliciter eadem*). Thus animality is simply or absolutely the same in the horse and in the lion.

Things that are equivocal (ὁμώνυμα) [5] are those which have the same name and the essence of which signified by this name is totally diverse in each of them (*totaliter diversa*). Thus the dog (a domestic animal), the dog-fish, and the constellation "canis" have only the name in common, this denoting in each of them something entirely different.

Things that are *analogous* are those which have the same name and the essence of which signified by this name is simply different in each of them, although there is some point of resemblance

[3] See John of St. Thomas, *Cursus phil.*, q. 13, a. 5, and Goudin, *Logica major*, Part I, disp. II, q. 1, a. 1.

[4] Aristotle, *Categoriae*, ch. i.

[5] *Ibid.*

between them, according to a certain proportion, κατ' ἀναλογίαν [6] (*simpliciter diversa, secundum quid tamen eadem, id est per aliquam proportionem*).

But analogy admits of subdivisions, and we can classify the divisions as given by St. Thomas by the schema on page 208 (cf. *De veritate*, q. 2, a. 11).

The analogy of attribution, or of proportion, calls for merely a simple attribution or extrinsic denomination; one or several things receive this denomination according to a *proportion* which they bear to another which is the principal one. Thus the air is said to be healthy as regards the animal in that it can preserve it in health; one's complexion is said to be healthy in so far as it is a sign of health; but health itself is found really only in the animal.[7] Maimonides would have conceded that God can be called good extrinsically and relatively to the goodness of the creature of which He is the cause.

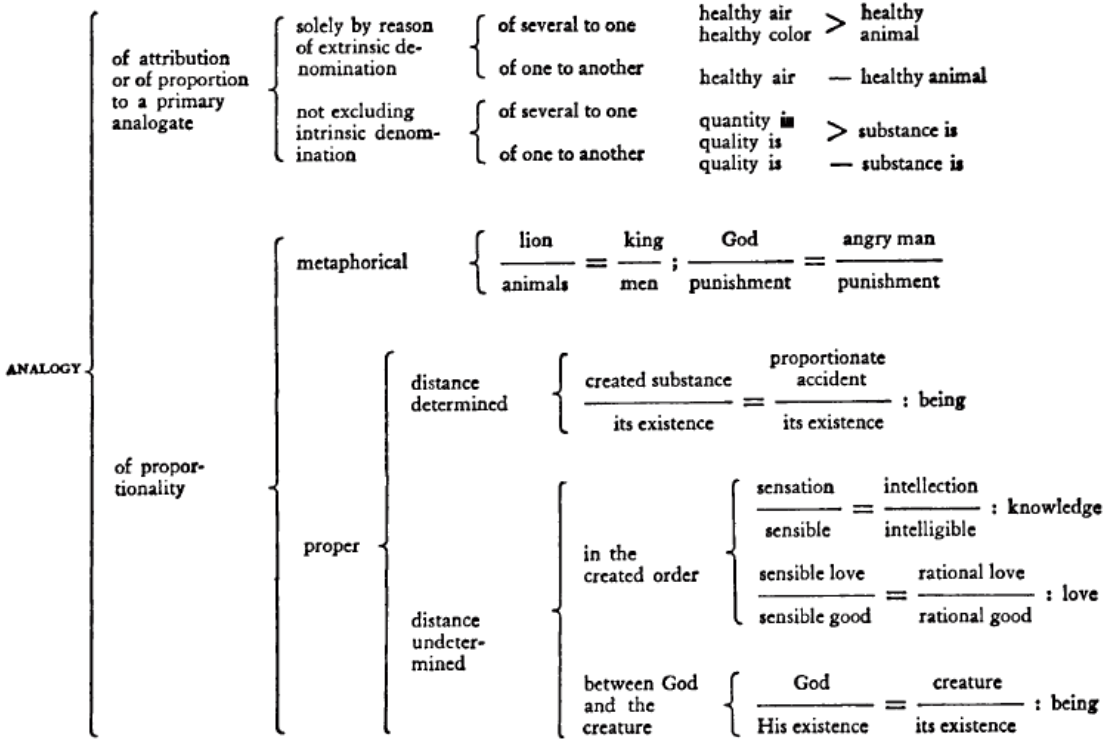
Analogy of attribution never implies intrinsic denomination in the various analogates, but does not necessarily exclude it. Thus it is that quantity and quality belong to being, because of their dependence upon being which alone subsists in them. Quality and quantity are, however, intrinsically realities in that we find verified in them both the analogy of attribution and the analogy of proper proportionality which we shall now consider. We may say, likewise, that the creature is, because of its dependence upon God.[8]

The analogy of proportionality, as its name indicates, is based

[6] Aristotle, *Post Analyt.*, Bk. II, chs. xiii, xiv; *Metaph.*, Bk. IV, ch. i; Bk. X, ch. i; Bk. XII, ch. iv; *Ethic. ad Nic.*, Bk. I, ch. vi.

[7] St. Thomas, Ia, q. 13, a. 5. This analogy of attribution is also called *analogy of proportion*, because it implies a proportion to a principal analogate. Cf. *De veritate*, q. 2, a. 11, and the *Tabula aurea* of the works of St. Thomas under the words *"analogia"* and *"proportio."*

[8] *Ibid.* St. Thomas remarks in this article that *God* and the *creature* cannot be analogates relatively to a third reality which would be superior to them, as quantity and quality are analogues relatively to substance upon which they depend. It would be an error to think that universal being is prior to God.


ANALOGY
of attribution or of proportion to a primary analogate
solely by reason of extrinsic denomination
of several to one
healthy air, healthy color > healthy animal
of one to another
healthy air — healthy animal
not excluding intrinsic denomination
of several to one
quantity is > substance is
of one to another
quality is — substance is
of proportionality
metaphorical
lion / animals = king / men ; God / punishment = angry man / punishment
proper
distance determined
created substance / its existence = proportionate accident / its existence : being
distance undetermined
in the created order
sensation / sensible = intellection / intelligible : knowledge
sensible love / sensible good = rational love / rational good : love
between God and the creature
God / His existence = creature / its existence : being

upon the proportionality existing between various things and not upon a denomination which would apply to them relatively to a principal analogate.[9]

This analogy is of two kinds: metaphorical and proper. *Metaphorically* we say that the lion is the king of animals because he is to the wild animals what a king among men is to his subjects. So, too, metaphorically we say of God that He is angry, because when inflicting punishment His attitude is that of an angry man when chastising others. But since anger is a passion of the sensible order, we see quite well that it cannot belong properly to God who is pure spirit. Maimonides and the Agnostics concede that this metaphorical analogy of proportionality is found to prevail between God and creatures; but such analogy amounts to more than a mere symbolism, as St. Thomas points out (*De veritate*, q. 2, a. 11; *De potentia*, q. 7, a. 5).

The analogy of proper proportionality presupposes that the analogy is really found, and in its strict sense, in each of the analogates. However, it does not admit of any determinate distance or proportion between the two analogates. For we must carefully distinguish between *proportion* which denotes a relation (*e. g.*, $\frac{2}{4}$) and *proportionality* which denotes equality or similarity between two relations (*e. g.*, $\frac{6}{3} = \frac{4}{2}$).

If there is proportion, as, for instance, between created substance and its proportionate accident, that is not what is considered here, but merely the similarity of the two relations; created substance is to its existence, as proportionate accident is to its existence. Each *exists* in quite a different manner, since substance exists in itself,

[9] There is no need here to mention the primary analogate in the definition of the others; but there is always, nevertheless, a primary analogate. In the analogy of metaphorical proportionality, it is that one to which the analogous term applies in its strict sense. In the analogy of proper proportionality, the primary analogate is that one which is the higher cause of the others. The analogical similarity prevailing in this latter case is always based upon causality. It exists either between the cause and the effect, or between the effects of one and the same cause.

and accident exists in substance. But, after all, accident is still *intrinsically* being in the *strict sense* of the word.

Often this analogy of proper proportionality exists between terms which have no distance or determinate proportion between them as, for instance, between sensation and intellection. Analogically, intrinsically, and in the *proper sense* of the term, both may truly be called knowledge. This analogy is clearly expressed by means of the following proportionality: sensation is to the sensible what intellection is to the intelligible. Likewise, sensible love is to sensible good what rational love is to rational good; analogically and according to the proper sense of the term, both are entitled to be called love.

It is this latter kind of analogy which, as St. Thomas remarks (*De veritate*, q. 2, a. 11), characterizes what applies *intrinsically* and *formally* to God and creatures.[10]

We will show that to attribute being to God is to say that the First Cause is to His existence what the creature is to its existence, just as intellection is to the intelligible what sensation is to the sensible. In this second case we can use the word *knowledge* in the proper sense, to designate what is common to both analogates; in the preceding case we can, on the same grounds, use the word *being* in the proper sense.

We see that, under pain of confusion with a univocal perfection, an analogous perfection, which applies intrinsically and formally to several analogates, can have only a unity of proportionality. It is one proportionally, not simply (*est una proportionaliter, non simpliciter una*). This point will be better understood by examining the unity of the concept of universal being.

b) Among the analogous perfections we must put in the firs

[10] There is an *analogy quite improperly so called*, of which St. Thomas nev speaks, for, in reality, it is a univocation. It is that which exists between two univocal perfections of different degrees: two walls differing in degree of whiteness. Scotus admits this *so-called analogy of inequality* between God and creatures, but by this he does not get away from univocation.

rank *being* and its transcendental properties: unity, truth, and goodness. These concepts have only unity of proportionality and cannot be abstracted perfectly from their analogates, because the former *actually imply* the latter.[11]

In fact, a common perfection which is differentiated by non-extrinsic differences actually implies these differences, although it does not contain them explicitly. But being and its transcendental properties are differentiated by non-extrinsic differences. Therefore being and the transcendentals *actually imply* their differences, although they do not contain them explicitly. This means that they imply multiplicity and not an absolute unity like univocal concepts (genera and species), but only a relative unity.

The major of this argument is evident. If the differences of a perfection common to several beings are not extrinsic to this perfection, they are intrinsic. There is no middle course. This perfection does not exclude them, but includes them confusedly, without, however, containing them explicitly or distinctly.

The explanation of the minor will make this clear. The differences of being which constitute substance and accident are not extrinsic to being, for they would be nothing (Ia, q. 3, a. 5; and *Metaph.*, III, ch. iii, lect. 8). Substance as substance, said Aristotle,[12] is still being, as it is one and true. It is the same with accident. But we cannot say that rationality in man is animality. Being contains, therefore, actually and implicitly the modes by which it is differentiated, and it is itself implied in them when they exist. Since it implies actually this multiplicity of modes of being, it has not, like a univocal concept, an absolute but only a relative unity, which must be, as we shall see, a unity of proportionality.

This is apparent in the very definition of being, in so far as it

[11] See John of St. Thomas, *loc. cit.*

[12] *Metaph.*, Bk. X, ch. i; Bk. IV, ch. i; Bk. XII, ch. iv. *Post Anal.*, Bk. II, ch. xiii, xiv; Nicomachean Ethics, Bk. I, ch. vi.

can be defined. Being is defined in two ways: (1) in what we may call a descriptive way: being is that which exists or at least can exist (*nomine entis communiter intelligitur id quod existit aut saltem existere potest*); (2) it can be defined in a more formal manner inasmuch as it is abstracted at least imperfectly from its analogates: being is that the act of which is existence (*ens est id cujus actus est esse*). Both of these definitions of being bring out clearly the multiplicity that it actually and implicitly contains, attributing to it but a relative unity.

In fact, in the first definition of being ("that which exists or at least can exist"), there is clearly seen a duality, that of real being, both actual and possible. If now we wish to conceive of actual real being, we perceive that its *actuality is essentially varied,* according as it exists by itself (God) or does not so exist (creature). The actuality exists formally in both cases but not at all in the same way. If, finally, we wish to conceive being which does not exist of itself but by reason of another, we perceive that this new mode of being also varies essentially, according as it exists in itself (substance) or in another (accident). The notion of being implies, therefore, a variation which is essential to it. There are not several different ways of being man, but there are several essentially different ways of existing.

BEING is { that which exists { by itself (God) / by reason of another (creature) { in itself (substance) / in another (accident) } } / or that which can exist. }

It is manifest that there is a distinction between the members of this division *not only by reason of their proper difference, but also inasmuch as they are being.* Substance differs from accident *not only as substance,* but *as being;* it has not the same mode of *existing,* and this mode is not extrinsic to it. But it is only by

reason of his specific difference (rationality) that man differs from the dog, and not by reason of his genus (animality). Animality designates in both the same mode of the same thing: a body endowed with sensitive life. From this we see that the unity concept of being is not an absolute but merely a relative unity, and the second definition of being shows clearly that this relative unity is one of proportionality.

Being, inasmuch as it is abstracted, at least imperfectly, from its analogates, is defined thus: that the act of which is existence (*id cujus actus est esse*). Why? Because all the analogates of being are entitled to be called *being* inasmuch as they express relation to existence (*prout se habent ad esse*), and they are *all the more* entitled to this as they express a more intimate relation to existence. $\frac{\text{God}}{\text{His being}} = \frac{\text{created substance}}{\text{its being}} = \frac{\text{accident}}{\text{its being.}}$

This relation to existence is not univocal, as, for instance, are the relations the equality between which constitutes an arithmetical proportionality, as: $\frac{4}{2} = \frac{6}{3}$. Four is twice two in the same way as six is twice three. The relative term "twice" is univocal. On the other hand, the relation to existence is *not the same* in that which exists of itself and that which exists by reason of another. We may, however, call it a proportionality not in an arithmetical but in a metaphysical sense; for that which exists of itself is related to its existence, as that which exists by reason of another is related to its existence. If, therefore, we wish to define being inasmuch as it abstracts at least imperfectly from its analogates, we must express above all in the definition this relation to existence which is found differently verified in the different analogates.

Let us point out, however, with Cajetan [13] and John of St. Thomas,[14] that the concept of analogous being is not the concept of a relation, as has sometimes been wrongly attributed to

[13] *De analogia nominum, loc. cit.*
[14] *Cursus phil.*, q. 13, a. 5.

the Thomists; it is the concept of that which is the basis of this relation to existence. We do not say: *"Ens est habitudo ad esse:* being denotes relation to existence"; but: *"ens est id cujus actus est esse:* being is that whose act is existence." And this *id* expresses in a confused way all the analogates, inasmuch as they are like one another because of the various ways in which they relate to existence. This relation is not accidental, like paternity; it is an *essential* or *transcendental relation.* In other words, it is the essence itself in so far as it refers to existence, just as intelligence refers to the intelligible.

The concept of being has truly a certain unity [15] and thus we can think of being without thinking *explicitly* of its analogates: God and creatures, substance and accident. It is in this way, too, that metaphysics, which has pure being as its subject, can be one as a science. But the unity of this concept is not absolute, for actually and implicitly it includes multiplicity. In fact, it is impossible to conceive *positively actual being, the actuality of which is essentially varied,* without thinking *confusedly* or *implicitly* both of self-existing being and of being which is not self-existing. Moreover, that is only an *inadequate* concept of being. To have

[15] We have already said, following Aristotle and St. Thomas (Ia, q. 85, a. 6), that the primary idea of being cannot be *false,* which means that it cannot be a false expression of the real, because since it is *simple* it cannot be the union of incompatible elements. This simplicity is not contrary, whatever Scotus may say, to the unity of proportionality of which we are now speaking. It would be contrary only to a unity resulting from a *composition* of elements which would be incompatible. Cajetan is very clear in what he says in his treatise *De analogia nominum,* ch. vi: "The analogue, as previously stated, is predicated of the analogates, and it is not only in name common to them, but is only one proportionally so in the uniqueness of its concept . . . ; it is *one not accidentally* or *by aggregation,* as a heap of stones, but it is directly evident that the analogue is *proportionally one.*" Likewise in his *De conceptu entis,* he says: "That being is also the most simple of concepts agrees with what has been said, for since *simplicity is opposed to composition,* also that which is one by analogy is not one by any composition." See also Appendix II: *The simplicity of the idea of being;* it is the contrary of the divine simplicity as the imperfect is the contrary to the perfect.

an *adequate* concept of being we must think *explicitly* of the manifoldness which is essential to it.[16] Do we wish to abstract being from its analogates? We define it as that the act of which is to exist. But even then, this relation to existence, since it is *essentially* varied, cannot be conceived without at least confusedly thinking of the members of the proportionality in which it is realized. On the other hand, we can quite well think of animal without confusedly thinking of the different species of animals; animality, since it is realized in the same way in all these species, can be *perfectly* abstracted from the specific differences which are extrinsic to it (*perfecte praescindit a differentiis specificis*).

In order to safeguard the absolute unity of the concept of being, certain Scotists and Suarezians do not consider being positively in itself, but only in that it is *opposed to nothingness,* as *non-nothingness.*[17] But it is clear that, since affirmation precedes negation, being is conceived before nothingness, which, too, cannot be thought of except as opposed to being. Moreover, the opposition of being to nothingness is itself *essentially varied,* according as it is necessary or contingent, and applies either to what is self-existing or is not so.

Cajetan is of the same mind when, in his treatises *De analogia nominum* (chs. iv and vi) and *De conceptu entis,* he keeps on repeating in different ways that "the concept of being, whether mental or objective, has not an absolute but only a *secundum quid* unity, that is, a unity according to proportionality." Speaking of the resolution of all other concepts into that of being, he writes: "All things resolve themselves into the objective and mental concepts which *are simple and one proportionally.*" (*De conceptu*

[16] Cajetan, *De conceptu entis,* says: "The adequate concept of the analogue demands the representation of all things which constitute the basis of analogy."

[17] Cf. Belmond, "L'univocité scotiste," in the *Revue de philosophie,* July 1, 1912, p. 41.

entis.) That is, too, what St. Thomas says many times.[18] The principal passage is in *De veritate,* q. 2, a 11.[19]

Likewise in *De veritate* (q. 23, a. 7 ad 9um) St. Thomas says: "As God is to those things which are befitting to Him, so is the creature to its own properties." The sensitive faculty *knows* sensible things, the human intelligence *knows* the reasons of things by a knowledge *caused* by the things, and the divine intelligence *knows* all created things by a knowledge which is the *cause* of things. In these three proportions it is clear that the word *"knows"* is not taken in the same sense or univocally, as, for instance, animality is attributed to man and dog. Also God

[18] See the general index to his works, *Tabula aurea* (Bergamo edition), under the words "analogia," n. 4, and "proportio," n. 3. Cf. Ia, q. 12, a. 1 ad 4um; III, d. 1, q. 1, a. 3; IV, d. 49, q. 2, a. 1, q. 1, 6um; *De veritate,* q. 2, a. 3, 4um; q. 2, a. 11, ε and 6um; q. 3, a. 1, 7um; q. 23, a. 7, 9um. *Quodl.,* 10, 17, 1um. See also the *Tabula aurea* for the exact meaning of the terms *"simpliciter"* and *"secundum quid"* according to St. Thomas.

[19] *De veritate,* q. 2, a. 11 ("Whether knowledge is predicated equivocally of God and us"). "Hence it must be said that the word 'knowledge' is predicated of God's knowledge and ours, not altogether univocally, not purely equivocally, but analogically; this is the same as saying that it is predicated proportionally. *Conformity according to proportion can be twofold, and thus we have two kinds of analogy.* There may be conformity between two terms which are proportionate to each other according to a fixed ratio, as between 2 and 1; 2 is the double of 1. Or again, there may be conformity between two terms *not proportionate to each other, but which are proportional, as between* 6 and 4, for 6 is to 3 as 4 is to 2. *The first kind of conformity is a proportion, the second kind is a proportionality* or similarity of proportions. According to the first mode of conformity we may say that being applies analogically both to substance and accident which is proportionate to it. But being could not apply in the same way to creatures and to God; *between the two there is but a similarity of proportions or a proportionality,* such as exists between our intelligence and the sense of sight: the intelligence is to the intelligible being what sight is to color; and this similarity of proportions can be expressed by the word 'knows.'

"Hence *according to the first mode of conformity* we find something analogically predicated of two things which bear a relation to each other, like *ens* which is predicated of substance and accident, because of the relation which substance bears to accident. And both the urine and the animal are said to be healthy because of some connection which urine has with the health of the animal.

"But sometimes something is predicated analogically according to the *second*

exists by His very essence and creatures *exist*, but not by their essence. Clearly the word *"exist"* is not taken in the same sense or univocally, although in the two proportions, it is true, according to the *proper* meaning of the term. There is in this neither metaphor nor symbolism.

To maintain with the Agnostics that in this similarity of proportions there are always two unknowns, is to reduce knowledge to the univocal kind and declare that God is absolutely unknown, because between Him and us there is nothing univocal. In fact, there are not two unknowns, but two created terms

mode of conformity, as seeing is predicated of both corporeal and intellectual vision because, as sense perception is in the eye, so intellectual perception is in the mind. Because, therefore, according to the *first mode* of analogical predication, there must be some determinate relation between those things which have something analogically in common, *it is impossible for anything according to this mode to be predicated of God and the creature. But in the second kind* of analogy there is no question of a determinate relation between those things which have something in common analogically, and therefore according to that mode *there is no reason why a name should not be predicated analogically of God and the creature.* But still this happens in two ways: (metaphorically and properly. . . . And properly for those things) which include nothing defective in their definition, and which do not depend upon matter for their existence, *such as being*, goodness, and others of this kind." From this text and similar ones to which we have referred, it can be seen that analogy of proportionality as taught by all the Thomists is certainly what St. Thomas himself held.

We may also say that, if the analogy of being is formally an analogy of proportionality, it is virtually an analogy of attribution, in the sense that, if it were possible for being not to be predicated intrinsically of creatures, it could still be attributed extrinsically, inasmuch as it is the effect of the First Being, just as urine is said to be of a healthy color inasmuch as it is a sign of health which belongs intrinsically to the animal. Cf. John of St. Thomas, *Cursus phil.*, q. 14, a. 3; and Goudin, *Metaph.*, q. 1, a. 2. In several texts of St. Thomas, for instance, *De veritate*, q. 23, a. 7 ad 9um, there is no deviation from this doctrine. But no one will ever find in his works either that being is predicated univocally of all things, or that there is any unity of concept other than that of proportionality. For St. Thomas, between being which belongs intrinsically to God and being which belongs intrinsically to creatures there is but a similarity of proportion, like that we find between knowledge which belongs properly to the intellect and that which belongs properly to sense perception. On this point it is evidently impossible to reconcile the Scotist and Suarezian doctrines with that of St. Thomas.

directly known, a term expressing the uncreated analogate indirectly known, from which we infer the fourth term:

$$\frac{\text{creature}}{\text{its being}} = \frac{\text{First Cause}}{\text{X}} \text{ or } \frac{\text{creature}}{\text{its being}} = \frac{\text{First Cause}}{\text{His Being}}$$

This point becomes clear if we recall that we have: (1) the *very confused concept of being in general,* such as the child has in its first intellectual perception; (2) the *concept of finite being* —we have a positive knowledge of its finite mode, which is nothing else but the essence of things that we see, such as stones, plants, animals; (3) the *concept of analogous being,* imperfectly abstracted from the finite mode; and this is the concept we have just been discussing. It is a precision of the first very confused concept which the child has, and the metaphysician acquires it in the process of explaining how the formal notion of being does not of itself admit of the first mode as found in creatures; (4) the *concept of the divine Being,* the cause of created beings. These, indeed, not having in themselves the reason for their existence, require a cause which is self-existing. In this concept of the divine Being, the divine mode is expressed only in a negative and relative way, for instance, by saying that He is the non-finite, the supreme Being. What positive element there is in this analogical knowledge of God is that which it has proportionally in common with the creature.

The Agnostics insist with the objection that, if the similarity of analogy is to be found only between the two relations $\frac{\text{God}}{\text{His being}} = \frac{\text{creature}}{\text{its being}}$, then the concept of analogous being is no more than that of a relation, and how are we then to avoid the Agnostic schema $\frac{\infty}{\infty} = \frac{a}{b}$ which means $\frac{?}{?} = \frac{a}{b}$? Are there not always two unknowns in the proportionality? At least it seems we have but a purely negative and relative knowledge. Nominalism has to say the same. The answer of moderate realism is that the

concept of being is not first of all one of relation like the concept of paternity. Paternity is the purely accidental relation of a man to his son. There are, on the contrary, non-accidental but essential relations which are implied in a determinate essence or in one of its faculties. The concept expressing this essence, expresses at the same time the relation that it contains. Thus *being* designates *that which* bears a relation to existence, and this relation is implied in the very nature of that which exists, and it is essentially varied according as it is necessary or contingent. Created essence in its inmost entity is entirely relative to its contingent existence, which it can lose; the uncreated essence is conceived only as relating to necessary existence with which it is identified. So also the concept of intelligence does not denote purely a relation; in us it signifies a faculty essentially related to intelligible being; in God it denotes the eternal and subsistent intellection of being always actually known.

These analogous perfections are not, therefore, pure relations. They are perfections which in created beings imply the compositions of two correlative elements: potentiality and act, which in God are pure act. Our intelligence conceives them as being all the more realized in proportion as they are purified of all potentiality. In God, therefore, they exist in the pure state.

From this we see that there are not two unknowns in the proportionalities established by theological science. In these equations God is appropriately designated by the term *First Cause,* since it is by this concept relative to contingent beings that we attain to Him in the first place, and afterwards we write down the perfections in their necessary order, whether or not they relate to creatures:

$$\frac{\text{contingent being}}{\text{its being}} = \frac{\text{First Cause}}{\text{His being}}$$

$$\frac{\text{immaterial creature}}{\text{its intelligence}} = \frac{\text{First immaterial Cause}}{\text{His intelligence}}$$

$$\frac{\text{intelligent creature}}{\text{its will}} = \frac{\text{First intelligent Cause}}{\text{His will}}, \text{ etc.}$$

In these equations there are two terms directly known, one uncreated term which is indirectly known by appealing to the principle of causality, and we infer the fourth term which is indirectly known in a *positive* way from what it has analogically in common with creatures in a *negative* and *relative* way as regards its proper divine mode.

Such is the radical difference between an absolute analogous perfection and one that is univocal. The former implies actually an essential variety. *Being as such is in this sense essentially varied* (*actu implicite:* implicitly in act). Scotus failed to perceive this radical difference. For him the concept of being has not only a proportional but an absolute unity, and is entitled to be called univocal, though it is not a genus. This univocation is defended by his disciples, at least from the logical [20] point of view, in so far as being is conceived as non-nothingness. We have seen that there is no foundation for this distinction. Suarez does not go so far as to say that being is univocal, but with Scotus he maintains the absolute unity of the concept, and looks upon analogy as doubtful.[21] Hence we do not see, according to the Thomist teaching, how being differs from a genus. If being as such is not essentially varied, the danger of falling into Pantheism is not at all imaginary. We shall have to return to this subject.

[20] Yet it is from the *logical* point of view that being is analogous as applied to God and creatures. What constitutes the *metaphysical* basis of this analogy is that in the creature *essence is not existence,* whereas God is existence itself.

[21] Cf. Suarez, *Disp. Metaph.*, II, sec. 2, n. 34: "Now I merely assert that every thing which has been said concerning the *unity* of the concept of being, appears to be clearer and more certain than that *being* is *analogous.* Therefore, in order to defend *analogy,* it is not right to deny the unity of the concept; but if one of the two must be denied, it is *analogy, which is uncertain,* that is to be denied rather than *unity* of concept, which seems to be demonstrated by sound arguments."

Unity of proportionality which we have just shown to apply to being, is found to exist on the same grounds in the transcendental properties of being; these are unity, truth, and goodness, which accompany being in all the categories and, like it, are also expressed proportionally. Thus beings are more or less one or undivided, more or less true or in conformity with the First Intelligence, more or less good or perfect. For instance, a fruit is *good* in its way, *physically so;* a virtuous man is good in his way, *morally so;* these various ways are not extrinsic to goodness, they are in themselves good, just as the different ways of being *one* are not extrinsic to unity, each in itself being one. The transcendental properties of being are not differentiated by extrinsic differences, but they imply these differences, as Aristotle saw very clearly.[22] The unity of their concept is therefore only a unity of proportionality. Hence there is only a similarity of proportion between the divine unity and that of our soul, for this latter is rich with a virtually infinite multiplicity. Divine truth is not only the conformity of intelligence with being or of being with intelligence, it is their identification. Divine goodness is not, like our virtues, a perfection superadded to and inhering in the essence, it is the very plenitude of divine Being.

c) What has just been said about abstract being and its properties is true of all the analogous perfections which common sense attributes to God, such as intelligence, wisdom, providence, free will, love, mercy, and justice.

It is manifestly an error for Agnostic symbolism to admit in these perfections only metaphorical analogies after the manner of that which enables us to say that God is angry. Anger is formally a passion of the sensible order which cannot be found

[22] Aristotle, *Metaph.*, Bk. IV, ch, i; Bk. X, ch. i; Bk. XII, ch. i; *Ethic. ad Nic.*, Bk. I, ch. vi; *Post Analyt.*, Bk. II, chs. xiii, xiv.

formally in God, who is pure spirit. On the other hand, intelligence, will, and their virtues are absolute perfections without any trace of imperfection.

Agnostic symbolism is again mistaken when all that it cares to see in the expression "God is intelligent" is an analogy of simple extrinsic attribution which has reference to creatures. It is as if this proposition merely meant that God can produce intelligence in us and may rightly be called intelligent, just as the air which is favorable to health is called healthy. For this reason God, who can produce corporeal beings, could be said to be corporeal. Here, too, symbolism forgets to distinguish between the absolute and the mixed perfections.

On the other hand, to think that intelligence, liberty, love, and justice denote in God and in us a perfection which is *absolutely one,* would end in anthropomorphism. In fact, these perfections, like being as such and its properties, have but a unity of proportionality.

The proof of this is, that they are immediately specified by being or by some property of being; they have, therefore, the same unity as it has.

This is easily explained for the intellect, the formal object of which is being; for the will, the formal object of which is goodness; for action, the formal object of which is realized being. The same is to be said of the perfections of the intellect: wisdom, providence (or prudence); and of the perfections of the will: love, mercy, and justice.

These notions, like that of being, have merely a unity of proportionality. Just as being is that which exists or *can* exist, that which exists of itself (God) or by reason of another (creature), so intelligence is either the ever actual knowledge of the self-subsisting Being (the divine intelligence), or it is simply the faculty which *can* know being (created intelligence). The will is either the ever actual love of the supreme Good (the divine will), or it is

simply the faculty *capable* of loving the good. Action is either the production and the preservation of being, precisely as being, of created things (creative action), or it is simply the production of a finite modality by the transformation of a pre-existing subject. Knowledge is caused in us by things; in God it is the cause of things. Love presupposes the amiability of the object loved; God's love causes this amiability in creatures. Human liberty is the dominating indifference of a power or faculty; in God it is the dominating indifference of pure act, etc. The analogy of proportionality, when fully understood, will enable us to solve the various antinomies relating to the divine perfections, antinomies which are the result of conceiving these perfections as univocal.

We may write, for instance:

intelligence	divine ;	object : divine essence	BEING
	angelic;	" : angelic "	
	human;	" : essence of sensible things	

If, then, the unity of concept (mental or objective) of absolute analogous perfections is only a unity of proportionality, it is not a contradiction for one and the same absolute analogous perfection to exist *formally* in two analogates, in spite of the infinite diversity of the modes according to which it is realized in each of them. This was really what Maimonides and Scotus failed to see. They considered the unity of concept of these perfections as absolute; hence there were only two possible conclusions:

(1) If God is absolutely simple, these perfections are not contained in Him formally, for that would be to introduce into the divine reality a distinction as in created being; this is the conclusion of Maimonides. (2) If these perfections are contained formally in God, they introduce in Him a formal distinction actual on the part of the thing and previous to the consideration of our mind; this is the conclusion of the formalism of

Scotus, from which Suarez escapes only by means of an inconsistency, having previously admitted the absolute unity of the concepts of the perfections common to God and creatures.

If, on the contrary, we properly understand unity of proportionality,[23] as just explained, there is no contradiction in the same analogous perfection existing *formally* according to infinitely diverse modes. Indeed, even in the created order, knowledge is *formally* present both in sensation and intellection, although between the two there is no determinate distance. It is not a contradiction for the absolute perfections, which imply no imperfection, to exist in an infinite mode; in other words, they are not repugnant to the infinitely perfect Being. Therefore they can exist *formally* in the two analogates, infinitely different from each other by their mode of being.

It remains for us to show how the eminent mode in which the different absolute perfections apply to God, allows of their being formally identified in the Deity without being destructive of one another. We have to explain this, not in a positive manner, for

[23] Belmond (*Revue de philosophie*, July and August, 1912, "L'Univocité scotiste"), in his defense of the Scotist doctrine, considers that the problem has not been stated fairly by the adversaries of the Subtle Doctor.

"The opponents of univocation," he says, "could have labored more effectively if they had expressed the question raised by Scotus by the following formula: Is it possible by means of abstraction so to *denature* the concept of *being* that it becomes the pure exclusion of absolute nothingness, without designating precisely either this or that, an affirmation *in globo* of all that in some way is outside of nothingness?"

"It is not for me," he adds, "to pass a premature judgment on their attitude as regards the Scotist question. I even conceive that they could have undertaken to prove that it is a false theory, that they might have rejected the idea of *univocal being*, as of no use, an extreme subtlety." *Revue de phil.*, July 1912, p. 43.

But it is just in this way that the great Thomists whom we have followed, especially Cajetan and John of St. Thomas, have stated the question and, as Belmond foresees, solved it. Being, they said, cannot be *perfectly abstracted* (*non perfecte praescindit*) from its analogates, for it contains them *actually though implicitly* (*actu implicite*). It cannot be so denatured that there is only *one meaning* left for it. Even reduced to denote non-nothingness, being is not invariably the same. Non-nothingness is *essentially varied*, for God is not non-nothingness in the same way that the creature is, as was previously explained by us.

that would be proving the mystery to be intrinsically evident, but in a negative and relative way.

57) *It is no contradiction for the absolute perfections to become really identical in the Deity and to be present there, however, formally and in the pure state; for, in proportion as they are purified from all imperfection, they tend, each according to its proper exigencies, in some way to become identical.*

In other words, if they are identified in the eminence of the formal notion of the Deity, it is not only in virtue of the general exigencies of the divine simplicity (*ex communibus*) that this is so, but also in virtue of the proper exigency of each of the perfections (*ex propriis*). Now nothing tends of itself to its own destruction, but on the contrary everything tends to its complete realization. Hence this identification, to which these perfections thus formally tend, instead of destroying them, must be the means of constituting them in the pure state, a state which can be known only negatively and relatively by us here on earth.

To understand this fully, we must condense into a few pages what St. Thomas and his school teach concerning the mutual relations between the divine attributes and the distinction between them.

We know that, according to St. Thomas, the plurality of the notions we form of God are due both to the debility of our intellect, which is incapable of comprehending the simplicity of the Deity, and to the sovereign perfection of God, in whom all the absolute perfections are contained eminently.[24]

[24] St. Thomas, on I Sent., 1, 2, q. 1, a. 3, writes: "That God exceeds our intellect, *is due to the plenitude of God's perfection and to the deficiency of our intellect in comprehending it.* Hence it is evident that the plurality of these concepts finds its explanation not only in our intellect, but also in God Himself, inasmuch as His perfection exceeds any concept whatsoever of our intellect. And therefore to the plurality of these concepts there corresponds something objective, which is God, not indeed a plurality of the object, but full perfection, the result of which is that all these concepts are applied to Him."

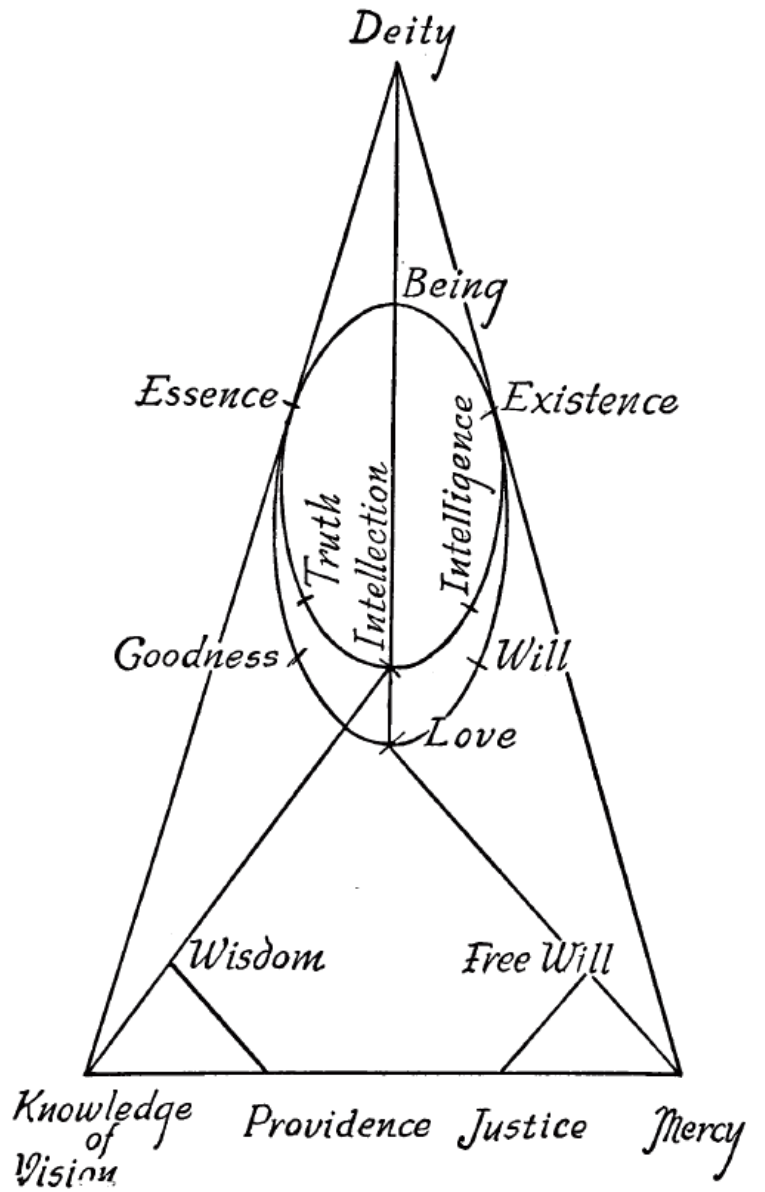
But there are some distinctions which are solely the outcome of the imperfection of our knowledge. It is not between two specifically different attributes that we introduce distinctions in God, but between potentiality and act which have the same specification; for instance, between the divine intelligence and intellection, or between God's omnipotence and His act. This is what makes St. Thomas say that: *"In God the idea of power is retained,* inasmuch as it is the principle of an effect; *not,* however, *as it is a principle of action,* for this is the divine essence itself; *except, perchance, after our manner of understanding . . .*" (Ia, q. 25, a. 1 ad 3um). There is no potentiality in God, and therefore no foundation for a virtual distinction between potentiality and act. If we happen to make this distinction, the only basis for doing so is in creatures, which serve us as a means for knowing God, but not in God Himself.

Starting from this principle, it is easy for us to arrange the divine perfections in three groups. Those who have studied the treatise on God as given in the *Theological Summa* of St. Thomas, and in the commentaries which the great Thomists, such as Cajetan, Bannez, and John of St. Thomas, have left us and also in the summary of their writings by Billuart, will not be surprised at this classification which the schema on the next page, as previously explained (n. 45), will enable us the better to understand.

Three groups of divine perfections can easily be discerned:

a) The perfections which are not virtually distinct from one another, according to a distinction which has its basis in God.[25] These are, on the one hand: being, essence, existence, operative power, intellection, and truth. They are written on the same curve in the schema diagrammed below. On the other hand: being,

[25] If we speak here of a virtual distinction, this can be only one that is *quite extrinsic,* for which there is no foundation in God but only in creatures, as will be explained.


Deity
Being
Essence
Existence
Truth
Intellection
Intelligence
Goodness
Will
Love
Wisdom
Free Will
Knowledge of Vision
Providence
Justice
Mercy

essence, existence, operative power, will, goodness, which are also written on the same curve.

b) *The perfections which are virtually distinct from one another solely because of the diverse relations they bear to creatures either actual or possible.* These are, for the divine intelligence: knowledge of simple intelligence or knowledge of possible things, knowledge of vision or knowledge of actual things, and providence which ordains and directs these things to the ultimate end of the whole universe. In the divine will, such perfections are: the free love of God for creatures whom He could have willed not to create; mercy or the will to come to the assistance of creatures in their misery; justice or the will to give creatures what is necessary for them to attain their end, and to reward them according to their merits or to punish them according to their demerits.

c) *The perfections which are virtually distinct from one another independently*[26] *of a relation to creatures either actual or possible.* These are: intellection and volition,[27] which would exist in God even if no creature were possible, much less realized. In the foregoing schema they are written on two distinct curves. For these last perfections it is more difficult to show how they can, without destroying each other, become really identical in the eminence of the Deity.

We single out here merely the positive attributes which are the only ones the identification of which in God presents a difficulty. Negative perfections are merely the negation of an imperfection (Ia, q. 13, a. 2). With regard to infinity and immutability, these are negatively expressed perfections which accompany the

[26] The word "independently" applies to these perfections and not to our imperfect knowledge of them.

[27] Divine truth and divine goodness are not virtually distinct on the part of the divine essence, but according as they are differently related to the divine intelligence and to the divine will.

various attributes. Thus we say: infinite being, infinite goodness, infinite power, infinite intelligence, infinite mercy, etc. Also immutability is fittingly predicated of the being of God, of His knowledge, providence, will, justice, etc. This immutability, moreover, like eternity, has its origin in absolute simplicity with which it is our effort to conciliate all the attributes. As for life, this is implied in intellection and volition.

Let us see how the attributes of each of the three groups just distinguished are identified in God.

a) *The perfections not virtually distinct from one another* are easily identified, even according to our mode of knowing them. What are these perfections? They are those which in creatures are distinguished not formally but only potentially; in other words they are those which have the same formal object and are in the same rank. For instance, essence is distinct from existence in the creature only because essence is potentiality with regard to existence. The same condition prevails between essence and operative power and equally so between this latter and operation, as also btween intelligence and intellection, or again between will and volition. Clearly these perfections are not virtually distinct in God; they become identical in Him, even according to our way of knowing them.[28] If they were virtually distinct in God, or, in other words, according to a distinction reasoned out by the mind which has its foundation in the divine reality, it would follow that there would be a foundation for conceiving in God something potential or imperfect; there would be, for instance, a

[28] In this case, however, we can concede an *extrinsic virtual distinction*, inasmuch as the pure actuality of God is equivalent eminently to potentiality and act which are distinct in the created order. But then we see that the foundation for this distinction is *entirely extrinsic* to God; it has not its *raison d'être* in the formal notions of the perfections so distinguished, but in their created mode which could not be found as such in God. Cf. Ia, q. 25, a. 1 ad 3um, and Gredt, *Metaphysica*, p. 196 f.

foundation for conceiving His essence as potentiality with regard to His existence, His intelligence as potentiality with regard to His intellection. Hence God would no longer be pure Act. As He is supreme Actuality, free from all potentiality, from all imperfection, there are no grounds in Him for our conceiving His essence as in potentiality for existence, operation, or anything else whatever.

Such is the doctrine of St. Thomas. It can be explained from his *Theological Summa* in which he devotes some special articles to the absolute identification, even according to our manner of knowing, of certain divine perfections, but not all of them. He proves that in God, who is pure Act, essence and existence are identical, and he also proves the identity of existing essence (subject) with intelligence, of intellection with essence which is the divine object of this intellection, and of existing essence also with will and volition. *Essence and existence are the same* (Ia, q. 3, a. 4). "Since God has no potentiality in Him, but is pure Act, His *intellect and its object* must be *altogether the same*" (Ia, q. 14, a. 2) and *His act of understanding is His essence and His existence* (subject-object). Ia, q. 14, a. 4; q. 54, a. 1, 2. *And as His intellect is His own existence, so is His will* (Ia, q. 19, a. 1). "In God *the idea of power* is retained, inasmuch as it is the principle of an effect; *not, however, as it is a principle of action, for this is the divine essence itself*" (Ia, q. 25, a. 1 ad 2um and ad 3um). Contrary to this, St. Thomas never wrote any article in order to identify the divine intellection and will. He acknowledges an intrinsic virtual distinction between them, which he does not admit between the above mentioned perfections.

Several Thomists have condensed this doctrine in the following proposition: "In God there is a virtual distinction between those perfections only which are distinguished in creatures not potentially (as essence and existence, or intelligence and intellection), but because of their formal concept or formal object, and

which therefore belong to different orders (as intellect and will)." [29]

It is upon the real and formal identification of the perfections of this first group that the attributes of the two following groups depend. But we now find the solution of the two so-called antinomies: (1) The duality of subject and object essential to all knowledge cannot be reconciled with the divine simplicity; (2) Absolute immutability is contrary to divine life which presupposes, like all life, a becoming.

1) The first of these two antinomies was formulated by Plotinus and taken up again by Fichte. Plotinus declared that the one is superior to intelligence, because intelligence implies duality of subject and object. For the same reason Fichte refused to admit the existence of a personal and conscious God. Spencer acknowledges that we must attribute knowledge to God, but at the same time refuse it to Him because it implies a duality which is contrary to the divine simplicity. St. Thomas considers this difficulty in Ia, q. 14, a. 2, obj. 1 and 2. He replies: "Let us not seek in God for a duality of intelligent subject and intelligible object, for this proceeds only from the potentiality of both. So

[29] See John of St. Thomas, on Ia, q. 14, disp. 16, a. 2, nn. 19, 20, 28, 33, and Billuart, *De Deo*, dissert. II, a. 1; and dissert. V, a. 1, *dico* 2. In n. 49 we showed that this is the conclusion of the Salmanticenses and of Gonet. Contenson, *De Deo*, Bk. I, diss. II, ch. ii, spec. 2, admits that there is no virtual distinction between divine intelligence and intellection, but, contrary to several Thomists, he believes that we must admit one between divine intelligence and its primary object, the divine essence. Billuart, *De Deo*, diss. II, a. 1, sec. 4, obj. 3, sums up the more common teaching of the Thomists. He says: "The object in every act of understanding seeks to be united with the intellect, and the more perfect is the intellection the more perfect is the union. Hence the divine intellection by reason of its infinity and supreme actuality, reaches such a degree of eminent and simple perfection that it becomes identical with its object, *without any virtual distinction for which thre is a real foundation*." This is precisely what St. Thomas teaches in Ia, q. 14, a. 2, when he says: "*Since God has nothing in Him of potentiality, but is pure act, His intellect and its object must be altogether the same*," and therefore are not virtually distinct. This thesis does not oblige us, moreover, to maintain that the divine intellection is what formally constitutes the essence of God.

also in us the sensible (or rather the object perceived) in act is sense in act, and the intelligible (or rather the object understood) in act is intellect in act. Our intellect is identified (intentionally or representatively) with its object in so far as it is actually *known;* if it is distinct from its object as an *entity* (*entitative*), this is because both are in potentiality and not pure act; because of this only, it follows that sense or intellect is distinct from the sensible or intelligible object, since both are in potentiality" (Ia, q. 14, a. 2).

In fact, man is *intelligent* in proportion as he is immaterial (Ia, q. 14, a. 1), in proportion as his form, his soul, dominates matter, space, and time, and enables him to know not only such being as is particular and contingent, existing *here* and *now,* but *being* as such. And as man is not being, intelligence in him is only a *power* or faculty in relation to being which is intentional, capable of representing it to itself. It is an accident belonging to the category of quality, and human intellection is merely an accidental act of this power.

Likewise, the object of the human intellect is *intelligible* only potentially in sensible things. We must also form for ourselves an idea, an intellectual image, which makes it actually intelligible. From this two-fold potentiality of our intellect and of the intelligible which is proportionate to it, arises the duality of subject and of being. Our intellect becomes identified in its act with its object in so far as it is *known,* but it is distinct from it in so far as it is *being.* And truth is the conformity of judgment with being which is judged, in so far precisely as it is distinct from judgment. "Truth is found in the intellect according as it apprehends a thing as it is" (Ia, q. 16, a. 5).[30]

[30] This prevents us from admitting the thesis maintained by Sertillanges in his *Saint Thomas d'Aquin,* II, 182, which is as follows: "Truth is not, directly, a relation that we bear to things. It is a relation that we bear to ourselves which is in corresponding equation with things. The subject of truth is judgment, and

God, who is the self-subsisting Being, must also be *intelligent,* according to the degree of His immateriality (Ia, q. 14, a. 1); and as He is, according to His definition, independent not only of all material and spatial limitation, but also of all limitation on the part of essence and potentiality, He is supremely intelligent, and His intelligence cannot be a faculty or power in relation to being, but it is *intellection itself* (self-subsisting intelligence).

As, moreover, God is *intelligible* also according to the degree of His immateriality, He is being in a state of supreme intelligibility. He has no need of having recourse to an expressed concept of Himself so as to render Himself intelligible in act; He is *of Himself* and always has been, not only actually knowable but *actually known,* otherwise He would not be pure Act in the intelligible order. Hence the divine intellection is identical with the divine essence, not only in so far as it is *known* (*intentionaliter*), but in so far as it is *being* (*entitative*). Without the least antinomy, the divine intelligence becomes identical with the divine essence in an eternally subsisting intellectual luminousness. Consequently, there could not be a virtual distinction in God between being and truth, since the divine being is not only in conformity with the divine intelligence, but is simply one with it.[31]

judgment is entirely within us, whereas one of the terms of simple apprehension is within us, the other being external to us. *Truth* is therefore purely an internal relation." "This conception of truth is little known," says the author, "even by those who profess to be Thomists. It is, however, of great consequence, for it implies, with regard to intellectual knowledge, a dose of subjectivity capable of counteracting the tendencies toward subjectivism."

On the contrary, we think that it favors these tendencies, that it tends to make one overlook the essential duality of subject and object in created intelligence, a duality which disappears only when we come to God."

[31] See St. Thomas, Ia, q. 16, a. 5: "Truth is found in the intellect according as it apprehends a thing as it is; and in things according as they have being conformable to an intellect. This is to the greatest degree found in God. *For His being is not only conformed to His intellect, but it is the very act of His intellect;* and His act of understanding is the measure and cause of every other being and of every other intellect, and He Himself is His own existence and act of under-

There is, therefore, absolute identity without virtual distinction[32] between the existing divine essence (thinking subject) and intelligence (operative power), the idea (cognitive determinant), intellection (act of knowledge), and the divine essence known or first truth (object). To admit here a virtual distinction would mean that it is possible for one of these perfections to be conceived as potential, *for which there is a real foundation* in the divine reality itself.

Is there a virtual distinction between willing or the act of love by which God necessarily loves Himself, and the divine essence which is both subject and object of this love? The answer is, no. The same holds good between willing and intellection. The divine will cannot be conceived as a power or faculty; it is identical with the divine essence (subject) and its act of love.[33] Besides, the object of this act is the sovereign Good which is of itself and always has been, not only lovable but actually loved.[34] If it were otherwise, then something would be wanting to Him as pure act in what pertains to goodness. Finally, this primary object of the divine love is not virtually distinct from the divine essence (subject), for this essence is of itself plenitude of being, and this plenitude is the very definition of goodness. We also say that God is good or essentially goodness. *"Deus est bonus per suam essentiam,* God is essentially good" (Ia, q. 6, a. 3).

2) The second antinomy, which can be solved by explaining this first group of perfections, relates to the *divine life,* which is

standing. Whence it follows not only that truth is in Him, but that He is truth itself, and the sovereign and first truth."

[32] If we can say there is a virtual distinction here, it is only an *extrinsic* virtual distinction which has its foundation, not in God, but in creatures.

[33] St. Thomas (Ia, q. 19, a. 1) says: "And as His intellect is His own existence, so is His will." "For each," as Cajetan points out, "is a second and immanent act."

[34] St. Thomas, Ia, q. 19, a. 1 ad 2um, says: "Will in us . . . not only seeks what it does not possess, but also loves what it does possess and delights in it. In this respect will is said to be in God, *as having always good which is its object, since,* as already said, *it is not distinct from His essence.*"

declared to be contrary to absolute immutability. All life seems, indeed, to imply a becoming. St. Thomas did not fail to consider this objection in the question treating of the divine life (Ia, q. 18, a. 3, obj. 1 and 2). He replies as follows: "As God is His very own existence and understanding, so is He His own life; and therefore He so lives that He has no principle of life." The act of intellection represents the highest degree of life, since we distinguish btween the vegetative, sensitive, and intellectual in life. Intellectual life in creatures implies a certain becoming because their intelligence is only a faculty which is in relation to being, and which must seek its object outside itself, *ab extrinseco*. Nevertheless, it is an imperfect life, for what characterizes life is *immanence* (*motus ab intrinseco*). If, on the contrary, pure intellection is identical in God with pure being always known, it follows that the divine life is pre-eminently, *absolutely immanent* life on the part of both subject and object, and consequently is absolutely *immobile and simple,* measured by *eternity* and not by time, which is but the measure of motion. Becoming is in life only an imperfection, the imperfection of changeable being which is either tending toward that which as yet it has not become, or losing that which it had. Life which implies a becoming, is a life which is but a birth with a blending also of death. Life free from all imperfection is eternal, one, indivisible, immutable with an immutability that is not a privation of motion, like inertia, but which is the negation of motion or of instability. It is the *absolute stability* of a subsistent knowledge and love which are of themselves and from all eternity all that they can be, without any possibility of increase or decrease. On the contrary, it would be truly an antinomy to posit in God an increase, for this essentially implies imperfection, the privation of that which one is seeking to acquire.

Our conclusion is established therefore without difficulty for the perfections of this first group. In proportion as they are puri-

fied of all potentiality or imperfection they tend to become really identical, not only according to the general exigencies of the divine simplicity (*ex communibus*), but also according to the proper exigencies of each of them (*ex propriis*). Hence this identification to which they thus formally tend, far from destroying them, must be the means of constituting them in the *pure state*. Being and intelligence, therefore, are contained formally in God, becoming absolutely identical in Him. It is this which most readily appeals to us in this mystery since for this first group, according to our manner of knowing, identification becomes peremptory because of the impossibility of admitting here an intrinsic virtual distinction, as this would involve potentiality in God.

b) *The perfections* of the second group are those *between which there is a virtual distinction solely on account of the diverse relations*[35] *they bear to creatures either actual or possible*. These are the intellectual virtues, some of them with regard to the others, and likewise the virtues of the will.

In God there is only one act of intellection, *unum intelligere subsistens* (one subsistent act of understanding), which has for its primary object the divine essence, the first truth. In this unique act we cannot introduce any virtual distinction on the part of God; but according to His various relations with created things, we virtually distinguish between His *knowledge* of *possible* things (*or that of simple intelligence*), His knowledge of *actual* things, which in time have been, are, or will be (*knowledge of vision* which presupposes the free decree calling these creatures into existence), and His *providence* or divine prudence which ordains or directs all things to the final end of the universe.

It is clear that a virtual distinction of this kind, since it is based

[35] This is an abridged form of speech, for it would be better to say: *on account of the diverse relations of creatures to God*, since there is a real relation of creatures to God, and only a logical relation of God to creatures. Cf. Ia, q. 13, a. 7; *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 2 ad 8.

solely upon the various relations to creatures, could not be contrary to the absolute simplicity of God. As John of St. Thomas says:[86] "Wisdom, knowledge, are sometimes taken to mean the act itself of the intellect in the universality of its extent, and thus wisdom is the same in God as His act of understanding and His existence. Sometimes they are taken to mean a special manner of understanding, and in this way wisdom denotes cognition by means of the highest causes, knowledge a cognition by means of inferior causes, prudence a cognition in directing things; and thus they are distinguished after the manner of certain intellectual virtues and the divine attributes (*D. Thom.* in I dist. 39, q. 2, a. 1). *Hence they are distinguished not because of the different formal grounds of knowledge, for the grounds are one and the same, in divine cognition; but because of a different connotation and reference to the objects ultimately known.*" Likewise Billuart, *De Deo,* dissert. V, art. 2, sec. 3.

It must be said that there are as many virtual distinctions in the divine volition or love between the necessary and free volition, as in this latter between mercy and justice. These virtual distinctions cannot be contrary to God's absolute simplicity since they are based solely upon the diverse relations which they bear to creatures.

In fact, as St. Thomas says (*Contra Gentes,* Bk. I, ch. lxxxii): "The divine will by one and the same act, wills Himself and other things. Now His relation to Himself is necessary and natural; whereas His relation to other things is by way of a kind of fittingness, not necessary and natural, not violent and unnatural, but free."[87]

We shall later (n. 63) examine the antinomy which Agnosticism

[86] On Ia, q. 14, disp. 16, art. 2, n. 41.

[87] "*Voluntas Dei uno et eodem actu vult se et alia, sed habitudo ejus ad se est necessaria et naturalis, habitudo ejus ad alia est secundum convenientiam quamdam, non quidem necessaria et naturalis, neque violenta aut innaturalis, sed voluntaria.*" *Contra Gentes,* Bk. I, ch. lxxxii.

claims to discover between divine liberty and immutability, as if the divine free act added to God something contingent and defectible.

It suffices for the present to note St. Thomas' reply to this objection (Ia, q. 19, a. 3 ad 4um). "That God does not necessarily will some of the things that He wills, does not result from defect in the divine will but from a defect belonging to the nature of the thing willed, namely, that the perfect goodness of God can be without it; and such defect accompanies all created good."

The difficulty of the Agnostics comes from this, that they consider the free act in God to be like the free act in human beings, not going beyond this to consider the analogous notion of liberty which is common to God and intellectual creatures. Our liberty is but the dominating indifference of a *power* or faculty as regards particular good, and that because our will is not goodness itself, but only a faculty which relates to good. Hence the free act in human beings is a defectible accident which is superadded to the volitional faculty. Contrary to this, the divine free act is the *dominating indifference, not of a power, but of pure act of subsisting love.* Hence the difficulty belongs only to particular good or to creatures that God can will or not will, since He already possesses, without them, supreme Goodness which is identical with his ever actual and eternally subsisting love.

The virtual distinction which we admit in the divine will between necessary and free love is not, therefore, irreconcilable with God's absolute simplicity. This distinction is based solely upon its various relations to creatures, and we see that the necessary and the free act of the will, if they are purified of all potentiality or imperfection, tend, according to their proper exigencies, to become identified in one and the same act. Liberty, far from

being destroyed, exists, therefore, formally and in a pure state in this identification.

The same is to be said of *mercy* and *justice*. In the free act of love they are virtually distinguished according as they are variously related to created beings. Mercy is, in fact, the will to help others in their misery (Ia, q. 21, a. 3); justice is the will to give them what is necessary for the attainment of their end, and also to reward them according to their merits or punish them according to their demerits. Avenging justice, which seems for the Agnostics to be incompatible with mercy, like it, proceeds from one and the same love of the sovereign Good, as St. Thomas explains in Ia, q. 23, a. 5 ad 3um. In fact, the sovereign Good has two essential and subordinate properties: (1) He is supremely diffusive of Himself, this being the principle of mercy; (2) He has an imperative and inalienable right to be loved above all things, this being the principle of avenging justice. This latter manifests itself against those who have deliberately despised the goodness and love of God whose demands are as sweet as they are absolute. Dante would have us see written on the gates of hell, that the holy hatred of evil which created this place of punishment is only an aspect of supreme Love for supreme Good.[38] And however obscure and terrible this mystery may be, we have sufficient insight into it to say that this hatred is not incompatible with mercy, but with that culpable license or liberalism which springs from indifference toward God, and which is nothing else than a want of love.

Mercy, moreover, always prevails over justice, for God owes nothing to the creature except on account of what pre-exists in it; and in the last analysis what pre-exists in it comes from God and

[38] "Justice incited my sublime Creator,
Created me divine omnipotence,
The highest Wisdom and the primal Love."
Canto III, Longfellow's translation.

has been given to it out of pure kindness, by an act of absolutely gratuitous love. The influence of mercy is thus more intense than that of justice. It manifests itself toward the damned, mitigating their punishments; if justice alone were meted out to the reprobates according to their deserts, their sufferings would be far greater (Ia, q. 21, a. 4 and ad 1um).

In order that this mystery of the reconciliation of justice with mercy be not a scandal for us, of His own accord God has willed to show how these two perfections, far from destroying each other in being united, find only in this union the realization of their supreme demands. By the death on the cross of the Word made flesh, "mercy and truth have met each other; justice and peace have kissed" (Ps. 84: 12).

God the Father, in demanding of Jesus Christ, by reason of His justice, an infinite satisfaction, as the offence was infinite, required of Him the most heroic act of love. And in consigning Him thus for our salvation to the glorious ignominy of death on the cross, He showed His own infinite love for the sovereign Good, for Christ, and for us. What is the sublimity of the cross, if not the harmony of perfections seemingly in opposition, the union of the supreme demands of justice and love?

> "The standard of our King comes forth,
> Bright shines the mystery of the Cross,
> Through which as man the Creator of man,
> On the gibbet was suspended."

Liberal Protestants who refuse to see anything more in the Passion of our Lord than a manifestation of God's love for us and not a demand of His justice, outrage this love which they claim they want to safeguard. They do not understand that, in proportion as love is purified of all imperfection, it becomes identical with mercy and justice. It is as absolute, imperative, and strong as it

is sweet and compassionate. This sweetness and mercy would be false and would no longer have anything divine about them, if they were not identical in God [39] with the holy demands expressed by justice. We are far from believing in that "good-natured God whom the world delights in creating for itself, and whom Bossuet, somewhere in his works, calls an idol." [40]

"Love is strong as death, jealousy as hard as hell. The lamps thereof are fire and flames. Many waters cannot quench charity, neither can the floods drown it" (Cant. 8:6). Love is strong as death; its holy hatred of evil is as inflexible as hell, its intensity is that of fire, a flame of Jehovah. High floods could not extinguish love nor could rivers submerge it. St. Thomas, in his commentary on this passage, writes: "Love is strong as death, because it separates the soul from the body, as is the case with one who dies from love as Christ did. Excess of love is hard as hell, because the pains that it caused Christ to endure were like those of hell. The torrent of tribulations and afflictions cannot extinguish love." In this eminent degree, as known by certain souls, victims of expiation, who are in union with the Crucified, mercy and justice are simply one; and in this life it is the highest degree of participation in the infinitely holy love that is in God.

As for the permission of evil, this could not be incompatible with sovereign Goodness and Omnipotence, for, as St. Augustine says: "God has permitted evil because He is good enough and powerful enough to draw good out of the very evil." [41] "This is

[39] We say "in God," because in Him this identification is necessary, whereas *ad extra* it is in a sense free. Of His own accord God willed to redeem us by the death of our Lord. He could have saved us by forgiving us our offences without demanding satisfaction, but the manifestation of His love would not have been so striking for us: *"God so loved the world, as to give His only begotten Son"* (John 3:16).

[40] Bishop Gay, *Vertus chrétiennes*, chapter on "faith," apropos of God's sanctity.

[41] *Enchiridion*, ch. xi: "Since God is in the highest degree good, He would not allow any evil to exist in His works, unless His omnipotence and goodness were such as to bring good even out of evil."

the part of the infinite goodness of God," says St. Thomas,[42] "that He should allow evil to exist, and out of it produce good," the heroism of the martyrs for instance (Ia, q. 2, a. 3 ad 1um). Besides, "creatures are by their nature, liable to fail, and it belongs to nature that what may fail should sometimes fail."[43] Among the good things for which the permission of evil is the condition we must include the manifestation of justice, *splendor justitiae,* the triumph of truth over error, of wisdom over false science, and of good over evil.[44] God is not bound to prevent, though He may, the perversity of false philosophers; He can even permit the wilful hardening of their hearts, but even that must contribute to His glory. If the vengeance of mercy cannot be His, in souls that no longer have the least wish to be reinstated and that are confirmed in evil, there is still left to Him the vengeance of justice. However mysterious it may be, this permission of evil, far from being opposed to the love of the sovereign Good, is manifestly subordinate to it and to the glory of God.

Thus are solved the so-called antinomies which concern the attributes of this second group, between which there is a virtual distinction according to the various ways in which they are related to creatures. These perfections, in proportion as they are purified of all potentiality or imperfection, tend *ex propriis,* according to the proper exigencies of each of them, to become identical. Hence

[42] See Ia, q. 2, a. 3 ad 1um: *"Hoc ergo ad infinitam bonitatem pertinet ut esse permittat mala, et ex eis eliciat bona."*

[43] See Ia, q. 48, a. 2 ad 3um: *"Ipsa natura rerum hoc habet, ut quae deficere possunt, quandoque deficiant."*

The permission of evil is thus *explained by the four causes:* (1) by the *final* cause; for the purpose of a greater good; (2) by the *efficient* cause; God's power is such that He can bring good even out of evil; (3) by the *material* cause; it is natural that what may fail should sometimes fail; (4) the *formal* cause in the permission of evil is thus seen to be quite different from what formally constitutes the culpable gratification in letting one do the wrong which ought to be prevented. God is not bound to prevent the defection of the creature which by its nature is liable to fail, a defection from which He will effect a greater good.

[44] See IIIa, q. 59, On Christ's judiciary power.

this identification does not destroy them or prevent them from existing *formally* in God, but constitutes them in a pure state.

c) *The third group* presents a greater difficulty. It includes the *perfections between which there is a virtual distinction, independently of all relation to creatures.* These are *intellection* and *volition,* which would exist in God even if no created being were possible.

In intellectual creatures, these perfections are distinguished not only by potentiality as, for instance, is the case between intelligence and its act which is intellection, but also because they belong formally to two distinct orders. We must therefore admit a virtual distinction between them. Moreover, this distinction is independent of any relation to creatures either actual or possible. God, by the very fact that He is immaterial, pure spirit, and at the same time the first Truth and the sovereign Good, necessarily knows and loves Himself before knowing and loving anything else. How, then, can these two perfections be formally in God and nevertheless become identical in the eminent formal concept of the Deity which is absolutely simple?

Particularly in this case the Agnostic will say that, if God is absolutely simple, intellection and volition can be said to belong to Him only virtually. On the contrary, Scotus insists that we should introduce into the divine reality his actual-formal distinction previous to the consideration of our mind, so as to be able to attribute formally to God intellection and volition. Scotus claims that if his distinction is rejected, then it is right to say that God knows by His will, and wills by His intellect.

The Thomists reply that [45] what is formally implied by Deity is so eminent that it can identify in itself intellection and love without destroying them. It is superior to these two perfections, yet it is still formally intellection and love, according to an all-divine eminent mode which only the blessed in heaven know in a positive way.

[45] Cf. Cajetan, on Ia, q. 13, a. 5; q. 39, a. 1.

However mysterious the real identification of the perfections of this third group may be for us, we can explain them in a negative and relative way. Intellection and love, in proportion as they are purified of all potentiality or imperfection, likewise tend to become identical, not only according to the general exigencies of the divine simplicity (*ex communibus*), but also according to their proper exigencies (*ex propriis*). In fact, as was shown when speaking of the first group of perfections, divine intellection and love are not virtually distinct from the divine essence which is their common subject and object.[46] The divine intellection is identical with its object, the divine essence or the first truth, without virtual distinction between them; the divine love is likewise identical with the divine essence taken in the sense of sovereign good. Besides, they are both identical with the divine essence as subject in thinking and loving. Are we not thus induced to say that two perfections which are virtually distinct from each other, but not from a third which is their common object and subject, tend to become really identical in this same third? [47] And as they tend toward it according to their proper exigencies, objective and subjective, this identification cannot destroy them. They subsist in it, therefore, formally and explicitly in a mysterious way, the posi-

[46] If we speak here at times of a virtual distinction, this can only be *a virtual distinction which is entirely extrinsic.* The foundation for it is not in God, since He is pure act, but in the creature, which is composed of potentiality and act. Therefore, in the above diagram, we have marked on one curve the divine intellection and the divine essence which is its subject and object; on another curve, which partly coincides with the first, are placed the divine will and the divine essence which is its subject and object.

[47] There is identification of divine intellection and volition in the divine essence, not such as we conceive it, as the *self-subsisting Being, but such as it is in itself,* according to the eminent and most intimate notion of *Deity.* That is why the Thomists, and the majority of theologians with them, say: "The *essence of God,* if taken *as it is objectively,* contains all attributes *formally and explicitly.* But if taken for what constitutes it essentially as such according to our mode of conceiving it, it contains them formally but only implicitly, and in a confused manner." Billuart, *De Deo,* diss. II, a. 2.

tive knowledge of which is unattainable for us in this world. Only an opposition of relation could prevent this identification of intellection and love; but this opposition exists only between the divine Persons, and it is only revelation that can make this known to us. "In God all things are one and the same where there is no opposition of relation."—Council of Florence (Denzinger, n. 703).

In this life, however, supernatural contemplation which proceeds from the highest of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the gift of wisdom, is a savory knowledge (*sapida sapientia*) of God, vivified by charity, a simple glance filled with admiration and love (IIa IIae, q. 45). From this we surmise what may be the nature of this identification of thought and love in God. In thus uniting, they are not at all mutually destructive, but they reinforce each other, and it is only there they are found in their pure state, free from all imperfection. In God intelligence is vital and loving; His love is always penetrated by wisdom, as free as He wishes it to be.

Thus is verified for the three groups of divine perfections the principle stated against the Agnosticism of Maimonides and the formalism of Scotus, namely, that there is no repugnance in the absolute perfections being really identical in the eminence of the formal notion of Deity and existing there, however, not only virtually but formally, and in a pure state. We have not the intrinsic evidence of this mystery which the blessed in heaven possess. Here on earth it is the object of a natural desire which is conditional and inefficacious, and also of a supernatural desire which is efficacious and absolute. But, although we do not have this intrinsic evidence, we have shown at least: (1) that there is in this identification of the divine attributes not an antinomy, but a mystery; (2) that we can explain this mystery in a negative and relative way. Thus we avoid Agnosticism without impairing, as the formalism of Scotus seems to do, the absolute simplicity of God. Our thesis is that of *moderate realism* (or of realistic conceptualism); the two others represent

the old established opposition of Nominalism and extreme Realism.[48]

Such is the solution of the fundamental antinomy brought against us, and it is the principle upon which the solution of the other antinomies rests. In conclusion, let us point out the difficulties (which the Thomists say cannot be solved) that are inherent in the formalism of Scotus and in the rather similar theory held by Suarez regarding the unity required for analogy.

58) *The difficulties inherent in the Scotist and Suarezian conceptions of the divine names.*

It is with regret that we here insist upon the differences between the theological schools. We are averse to entering into the theological controversies; they have been too long, too violent, at times too human. Have we not in these days enough common enemies against whom we must unite for the defence of the faith and the good of souls? We introduce this subject here because St. Thomas' sublime teaching on the divine names has sometimes been misunderstood and more or less confused with the formalism of Scotus who took the opposite view, or with the attempts proposed by Suarez. We must note these differences so as to set forth the true meaning and import of the mind of the Angelic Doctor.

With Scotus, there is a close connection between his two doctrines of the univocation of being and the actual-formal distinction between the divine attributes.

He contends that being is universal: (1) because we can be certain there is being, and yet doubt regarding the distinction between God and the world; in this case it is a determinate concept

[48] In Sertillanges, *S. Thomas d'Aquin* (Vol. I, ch. i), in the consideration of the analogical knowledge of God, we regret not to find an explanation of the doctrine of St. Thomas, and the way in which it differs radically from the Agnosticism of Maimonides so often attacked by him. Not enough is said as to how the absolute perfections are found to exist in God not only eminently but also formally.

that we have of being, but not of God or creature. He thinks, therefore, that we abstract being perfectly from either the created or divine being, and that this concept thus abstracted is absolutely one; (2) the demonstrations of the existence of God and His attributes, so as not to admit of four terms, presuppose a middle term which is predicated univocally of God and creatures; (3) if it were not so, there would be no way of knowing God by means of a simple concept abstracted from sensible things. Maimonides would be right.[49]

According to Scotus there is an *actual-formal distinction,* previ-

[49] Such are, in brief, Scotus' arguments as given in I, dist. 3, q. 1, 3; and dist. 8, q. 3. Cajetan has refuted them in his commentary on Ia, q. 13, a. 5, and more at length in his *De analogia nominum,* and in his commentary on *De ente et essentia,* q. 3: (1) Inasmuch as the analogical concept of being does not contain explicitly, but only actually and implicitly and in a confused way, the concepts of God and the creature, it can be determined, though the others are not. (2) In a syllogism the middle term can be analogous; unity of proportionality is sufficient; as Aristotle explained in his *Post. Anal.,* chs. xiii and xiv (St. Thomas' commentary, lect. 17, 18). In fact, the syllogism is based upon the principle of contradiction, and contradiction consists in affirming and denying one and the same predicate of one and the same subject, and not in affirming and denying one and the same univocal predicate of one and the same univocal subject. Identity includes identity of proportionality. (3) We can have a positive knowledge of God inasmuch as there is analogical resemblance to Him on the part of creatures (by participation or by imitation). See also the refutation of Scotus' objections in Goudin, *Metaphysica,* q. 1, a. 2; and John of St. Thomas, *Logica,* q. 13, a. 5. Still the Scotists object: "If subordinate modes were included in the concept of being, even implicitly and in a confused manner, then, if being were predicated of anything whatsoever, the subordinate modes would be predicated, to wit, God and the creature, substance and accident. The consequence is false: for every being would be God, creature, etc. . . . Therefore the antecedent is also false."

Goudin replies: "I distinguish the major. If being included subordinate modes *determinately and as it were copulatively, concedo; indeterminately and as it were disjunctively, nego.* Being, however, does not include the subordinate modes determinately and conjunctively, but only indeterminately and *as it were disjunctively,* inasmuch as it denotes some mode of being, whatever that may be. But when it descends to the subordinate modes, that mode of being which was indeterminate becomes determinate, the one in God, the other in the creature, the one in accident, the other in substance." To put it more briefly: "The many others correspond to the concept of being *as proportionately alike,* but each one in its own way."

Thus, when we say, *"God is being,"* being attributed to God contains eminently

ous to the mind's consideration, between the metaphysical degrees of one and the same being; as, for instance, in Socrates, between being, substantiality, corporeity, animality, and rationality. We must, then, bear well in mind that univocation of being, thus distinguished from the other formalities, is not only a logical but also a metaphysical univocation, and not unjustly has it been generally criticized by Thomists, such as Capreolus, Cajetan, John of St. Thomas, and others.

Thus on the supposition that the concept of being is univocal, it must designate in God, *as* in creatures, a perfection formally distinct from the other absolute perfections, from wisdom for instance. The distinction in God, as in creatures, must be previous to the consideration of our mind. Hence, according to Scotus, the virtual distinction of the Thomists is insufficient, like the purely mental one of the Nominalists; for, in the divine reality, justice would be the same as mercy, and we should have to say that God punishes sinners by His mercy and pardons them by His justice. Contradictories would be verified in God. The Subtle Doctor does not accept, however, the real distinction admitted by the extreme realists and condemned by the Church. He maintains, therefore, the existence of an actual-formal distinction which is neither real nor formal (I, dist. 8, q. 4). Univocation of being seems, indeed, to require this conclusion.

This Scotist view has many difficulties to contend with. Vacant remarks:[50] "When we study the controversies concerning this

created being which is a participated resemblance of it. When we say, "the creature *is*," being attributed to the creature is a participated resemblance of God's being.

It would seem that the purpose of this last objection of the Scotists is to show that analogy of being must end in Pantheism; on the contrary, it is univocation that leads to it. The apparent force of the objection comes from the fact that being, after the manner of Rosmini, is still conceived to be univocal. If it is univocal and also contains actually and implicitly its differences (which, moreover, is a contradiction), the Pantheistic contradiction must follow as a necessary consequence.

[50] Vacant, *Etudes comparées sur la philosophie de Saint Thomas et sur celle de Duns Scot*, p. 22.

subject on a certain point, they seem in most cases to amount to a question of words of no significance. But it is a different matter when these words are viewed in their philosophical setting." We will point out three principal difficulties.

1) The actual-formal distinction seems to be absolutely incompatible with the *divine simplicity*. This distinction is the one which, according to Scotus, exists between the soul and its faculties and between the faculties themselves. How are we to reconcile with the absolute simplicity of God a distinction of the same kind as that we find to exist between the faculties of the soul? What is, in fact, this actual-formal distinction? If it is not a logical distinction, it must be a real distinction. As Vacant says,[51] along with all the Thomists, "a formal distinction which is neither real nor logical seems to be a contradiction. It must be that what our mind distinguishes formally, is distinguished or not distinguished *really* in the object which we are considering and which exists outside our mind. There is no other choice." To avoid the real distinction, we should have to reduce to a mere question of words the arguments of Scotus against St. Thomas. Now, the real distinction of the divine attributes is manifestly incompatible with the absolute simplicity of the divine nature. It is only between the divine Persons that there can be a real distinction, and this because of the relations of opposition between them, which can be made known to us only by revelation. "In God all things are one and *the same* where there is no relation of opposition."—Council of Florence (Denzinger, n. 703).

2) Univocation of being paves the way for *Pantheism*. Equally with the actual-formal distinction between the divine attributes, with which it is closely connected, the doctrine of the univocation of being is of the essence of Scotism. Scotus claims to prove this fully, at the same time maintaining that being is not a genus. This, in the opinion of the Thomists, is an inconsistency; for, if being

[51] Vacant, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

is univocal, the modes which differentiate it are necessarily extrinsic to it, just as the specific differences are to the genus.

Strange to say, Scotus, on certain occasions, without abandoning univocation, maintains analogy of being. He writes, for instance, in his *De rerum principio* (q. 1, a. 3, n. 20):[52] "Concerning the nature of being it must be understood that unity of being, when the term 'being' is taken in its broad sense as including the Creator and the creature, this unity is not generic but analogical." Father Mariano Fernandez Garcia, in his recent edition of this work (1910), explains in a footnote that this analogy is quite compatible with Scotist univocation which implies only that unity necessary for the verification of the principle of contradiction which forbids one to affirm and deny the same univocal predicate of the same subject. To that the Thomists have always replied, that contradiction consists in affirming and denying one and the same predicate of one and the same subject, and not one and the same univocal predicate of one and the same univocal subject. Identity includes identity of proportionality, as explained by Aristotle in his *Post. Anal.* Bk. II, chs. xiii and xiv (Comm. of St. Thomas, lect. 17 and 19).[53]

Several Scotists, such as Belmond,[54] maintain that the Scotist univocation is not in opposition to the analogy of St. Thomas. We ask for nothing more, and this effort to moderate this univocation is for us another indication of the truth of the Thomistic doc-

[52] See q. 1, a. 3, n. 20.

[53] Aristotle after speaking, apropos of demonstration, of the univocal middle term, says: "We can also choose as middle term an analogue, one according to proportion." St. Thomas explains this by saying: "But from this common analogue certain results follow because of the unity of proportion, as when things are the same generic or specific nature. For instance, the term *'principle'* is analogous; the resulting syllogism, however, is rigorously conclusive, the principle having priority over what follows from it. Now the spring is the principle of the river; therefore it comes before it. Thus we can say that in the creature immateriality is the reason for intelligence, from which result the will and liberty. It will be *the same in God, though not univocally but proportionately.*

[54] *Revue de philosophie,* August 1, 1912, "L'univocité scotiste."

trine which we are defending. It is no less true that, even if the difference between the two were reduced to a question of words, the term univocation can only serve to bring about a great confusion of concepts, as Father Petazzi, S.J., has shown in his interesting articles on this subject.[55]

However moderated it may be, univocation seems to us to be absolutely incompatible with analogy, as we have already shown. For, after all, once univocation is admitted, *being as being is no longer essentially varied;* it no longer implies essential variety. Hence how can we avoid the danger of confusing God's being with that of creatures? Concerning the absolute Monism of Parmenides, who declared all multiplicity to be an illusion, St. Thomas says: *"Parmenides' mistake was in conceiving being to be univocal like a genus."* [56] The Eleatic philosopher started from this principle that *being is one,* and, observing that *besides being there is nothing* (*praeter ens nihil est*), he concluded that *being can be diversified neither by itself nor by anything else.* The modes by which it would be differentiated, since they are extrinsic to it, would be nothing. It is the most condemned form of extreme realism. The universal as such exists outside the mind; universal being and the divine being are identical. Spinoza, not to be illogical, ought to return to the theory of Parmenides and deny the existence of the world, or else declare its absorption in God.

Capreolus,[57] having declared this Scotist doctrine to be false, "to wit, that being is predicated univocally of God and creatures," at once points out the conclusion which, in his opinion, follows from it, in these words: "It follows from this that if God creates or simply annihilates the ass, He creates or annihilates Himself or some formality which is God, to wit, the formality of being

[55] *Rivista de filosofia neo-scolastica,* February 1912, "Univocita od analogia."

[56] St. Thomas, *in Metaph.,* I, ch. v, lect. 9: *"In this Parmenides was deceived, in that he used the term 'being' as if it were one in meaning and nature, as genus is. But this is impossible."*

[57] *In III Sent.,* dist. V, q. 3, sec. 1, ad 11um.

and of substance." Vacant likewise says: "If we seek to interpret the mind of Scotus, we find ourselves confronted with the alternative either of looking upon the controversy as a question of words or else of accusing him of paving the way for Pantheism." [58] Schwane expresses himself in the same way in his *Histoire des dogmes,* IV, 205 f. He sees in the theory of Scotus "a point of view diametrically opposed to that of St. Thomas."

That we may see the connection between univocation of being and Monism, it is enough for us to consider carefully the first sixteen propositions of Rosmini condemned in 1887 (cf. Denzinger, nn. 1891–1930). As a matter of fact, Rosmini, too, sought to discover at least a minimum of univocation between God and creatures. It is the basic error of these first sixteen propositions. We need only quote the sixth: "In being that *prescinds* from creatures and from God, which is *indeterminate being,* and in God which is not indeterminate but absolute being, the essence is the same." The fifth proposition is deduced from this: "Being which man acquires by intuition, must be something of the necessary and eternal being, of the creative, determining, and final cause of all contingent beings: and this is God." Moreover, if being is univocal, the modes by which it is differentiated (*i. e.,* created essences) must be extrinsic to it as the specific difference is to the genus; hence these modes are no longer being but a simple negation. This brings us to the twelfth proposition of Rosmini; "Finite reality does not exist, but God causes it to exist by adding limitation to infinite reality. Being which actualizes finite natures, united with them, is an *excision from God.*" According to the way Rosmini views things, it is as if creatures were to God as colors are to light, and even since their differentiating modes are nothing, the logical end of this must be the absolute Monism of Parmenides.

3) From this arises a third difficulty: univocation of being

[58] Vacant, *op. cit.,* p. 25.

seems absolutely to comprise the essential and necessary *distinction between the natural and the supernatural order,* and Scotus is led to consider this to be a contingent distinction, dependent upon the free will of God.

In fact, if being is analogous, it is certain that a created intellect cannot know, by its natural powers alone, the divine essence such as it is in itself. The created intellect has created being which is proportionate to it, for its proper and natural object; and the human intellect united with a body has the essence of sensible things for its proper and natural object. Therefore the only natural knowledge of God that we can have is by means of the analogical likeness of Himself which God has imprinted upon creatures. The *immediate* knowledge of the divine essence can be only supernatural; it exceeds our proper and natural object, and if there is no repugnance in this, that is because it does not exceed our adequate object which is universal being. This is proved by St. Thomas in Ia, q. 12, a. 4. God is God, the creature is a creature. For a creature to see God naturally as He sees Himself, it would need to have God's nature; it would be at the same time created and uncreated, which is absurd. Cf. III, *Contra Gentes,* ch. lii.

Scotus, we know, strives to invalidate this demonstration of St. Thomas (cf. Scotus on I, dist. 3, q. 3; IV, dist. 49, q. 11; and Cajetan on Ia, q. 12, a. 4). For the Subtle Doctor, the object of our intellect is simply *being.* Does he not consider being to be univocal? He refuses to assign to the human intellect a naturally proportionate object, which is the essence of sensible things. And if the Thomists object against him that we ought then to have *immediate* knowledge of all beings, God Himself included, Scotus replies: "In our *present state* it is true that our understanding has no conception of anything except by means of concepts derived from material things and with the help of sensible images; but that may be either a punishment of original sin, or the result of an agreement between the faculties which prevents our intel-

lect from having any conception of anything, unless at the same moment there is formed in the imagination a sensible image of the object. But this agreement which persists in the present state has *nothing to do with the nature of our understanding,* either in so far as it is understanding, or in so far as it is united with a body, inasmuch as it will no longer be in existence when our body shall have risen again glorified.[59] Consequently, whatever may be *the cause of our present condition, whether it be purely the will of God or a just punishment or a mental infirmity* . . . or something else, the object of our understanding as a faculty is not only the essence of sensible things, but also something which is common to all intelligible things." [60]

Scotus is thus led to admit that there is in us a natural and *innate* desire (and not only elicited) [61] of seeing God. This desire is the very tendency of our nature.[62] Hence we can no more see how this desire is not efficacious and does not constitute an exigency.

We conceive that a natural and elicited desire which results from knowledge is inefficacious, if this knowledge is conditional: it would be good for us to see God, if it pleased Him to elevate us gratuitously to this vision. We thus avoid the heresy of Baius (Denzinger, n. 1021). How can a natural and innate desire which precedes all knowledge be merely a velleity; why does it not constitute an exigency? It is the very tendency of our nature. If it was possible for God, as *Author of our nature,* to give us this desire,

[59] As if that could not be a gratuitous privilege of the glorious state.

[60] Scotus (I Sent., dist. 3, q. 3, nn. 24, 25) says: "Whatever then may be the cause of this condition, whether it be the will of God or a just punishment or an infirmity which Augustine hints at (*De Trinitate,* Bk. XV, last chapter) when he says: *"What is the reason, if it is not, indeed, because of a weakness that you cannot with fixed gaze behold this light? And was not sin truly the cause of this?* Whether, I say, this be the total cause, or there are some other causes, at least the primary object of the intellect, as a faculty, is not the quiddity of a material thing." Cf. Vacant, *op. cit.,* pp. 17 f.

[61] "Elicited" means that it is the result of a cognitive act.

[62] Scotus, *Prolog. Sent.,* q. 1; see John of St. Thomas, *Cursus theol.,* disp. 12, a. 3.

He ought, in so far as He is *our final end* in the natural order, to be able to satisfy it, for the order of agents corresponds to the order of ends. Consequently our natural end would have to be confused with the supernatural end. Thus we can explain why Scotus denied the necessity of the light of glory for the beatific vision [63] and the necessity of the infused moral virtues,[64] and why he reduces the supernatural nature of faith to that of a mode which exalts natural faith.[65]

As Vacant observes (*op. cit.*, p. 15), the distinction between the natural and the supernatural is therefore for Scotus contingent and free. "It depends upon God's arbitrary determination." This is tantamount to saying that it is not repugnant for a creature to know God naturally, as God naturally knows Himself. In other words, it is not repugnant for God to create a supernatural substance; but this substance would and would not have the same nature as God; it would thus be a created, a contingent God, which is an absurdity. God's liberty cannot be extended to the

[63] Cf. Cajetan, on Ia, q. 12, a. 5, n. 9: "And note well that Scotus can no longer be upheld on this subject." And in n. 12 we read: "But from these statements it is evident that the opinion of Scotus is false; he would have it that the natural and supernatural do not distinguish between entities, but between their relations to their active causes."

[64] Scotus, III, dist. 36 (Vives ed. XV, 701). Cf. Cajetan, on Ia IIae, q. 63, a. 3.

[65] Scotus, III, dist. 23: As the will is made perfect by charity, so is the intellect by faith; "although the will can love *God clearly seen objectively*, yet it cannot do so *in that way* without charity and with charity . . . as charity makes the second act more perfect, so also does faith." Cf. art. "Duns Scotus" in the *Dictionnaire de théol. cathol.*, col. 1906, n. 3. We know that Molina follows Scotus on this point. *Concordia*, q. 14, a. 13, disp. 7, 8. For them, faith is not entitatively but modally supernatural. Cf. Billuart, *De gratia*, diss. III, a. 2, sec. 2. We have explained the Thomistic doctrine on this point in another work, *De revelatione*, I, 458–514.

Suarez does not follow Scotus on this point, but admits that the obediential power is active and not passive, which is the teaching of St. Thomas. Cf. John of St. Thomas (on Ia, q. 12, disp. 14, a. 2, n. 11), who considers the active obediential power of Suarez to be a contradiction. It would be essentially natural, as being a property of the nature, and at the same time essentially supernatural, as being specified by a supernatural object. From this arise many differences between Suarez and the Thomists concerning the questions of grace.

realization of contradictories. God is God, the creature is a creature; this is one of the formulas by which the principle of identity or of non-contradiction is expressed. The theologians also generally maintain, against Ripalda, that a created supernatural substance is an evident contradiction. (Cf. Billuart, *De Deo,* diss. IV, sec. 4.)

From this contingency, which does away with the necessity of finite essences, Scotus concludes that only our duties toward God are necessary, but those toward ourselves and our neighbors are contingent. God could have willed them to be other than they are (III, d. 37). This necessity of the natural law is thus reduced to a religious morality. In virtue of the same contingent principle, Scotus declares that the immortality of the soul cannot be proved, for it may be, he says, that the soul is immortal not by its nature, but miraculously. (*Idem.*, q. 2, n. 23.)

This doctrine of contingency is in perfect agreement with the voluntarism of Scotus and with many of his Nominalistic tendencies; [66] but it seems to establish a trend of thought which is opposed to the realistic formalism of the univocation of being, for this latter view, if the truth were admitted, would lead rather to Pantheism and eventually to Determinism.[67] It is difficult to say

[66] Scotus takes the view of absolute Realism when he substitutes his formal-actual distinction for the mental distinction of St. Thomas, but he takes the view of Agnostic Nominalism when he substitutes it for real distinctions, for instance, when he denies a real distinction between the faculties of the soul. If there is no real distinction between intellect and sight, it ought to follow that intellect is the same thing as sight, and that the distinction between the two is only mental. Cf. Vacant, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

[67] Truly this opposition is the result of extreme Realism and shows the falsity of it. This is clearly seen in the case of absolute and Pantheistic Realism which is in itself inevitably a contradiction. In fact, *absolute Realism, applied to the notion of being,* confuses the universal with the divine being, and the *necessary consequence of this is that the subordinate notions of genera and species become involved in Nominalism.* This is very clearly seen in the writings of Parmenides and Spinoza; genera and species are nothing but vain abstractions, *flatus vocis* (vocal sounds), and so are created substances and the faculties. There is nothing truly real left except unique substance. The two extremes meet: Absolute Realism

which of these two trends of thought predominates. We therefore think that Scotism is not really a system; it is not sufficiently connected, coherent, unified, to be called a system. This should not surprise us, since Scotus declares that theology is not a speculative but only a practical science.[68] From this it would follow that theology cannot claim organization into a system, into a *Summa* in the scientific sense of the term; it can be only a collection of sentences and maxims.

Whatever the dominant trend of thought with Scotus, as regards the question which here concerns us, we must conclude with Scheeben[69] that: "Compared with the profound explanation of God's invisibility given by St. Thomas, that of Scotus, who attacks it, seems to be very superficial and mechanical. Scotus merely says that God is naturally invisible to creatures, because His absolute independence requires that He should not distribute His light around Him except when He wills to do so out of condescension to creatures. To reason thus, is not only no explanation, but is a notable weakening of the essential point to be explained, which is that God, in consequence of His being naturally invisible, can make Himself visible not simply by an act of His will, but by a supernatural influence which transfigures the perception of the created mind."

The danger of confounding the natural with the supernatural appears also in the case of Rosmini, as a consequence of his maintaining that being in univocal. See Rosminian propositions 36, 37, 38. The thirty-sixth reads: "The supernatural order consists in

and Nominalism. We find something similar to this in the modern philosophy of action; on the one hand it tends to confound the natural with the supernatural, and such a view would lead to Pantheism; on the other hand it is given up to a criticism of intellectualism which ends in more or less Agnostic Nominalism. And, of course, the philosophy of action is incomparably more removed from Thomism than the doctrine of Scotus is. In this philosophy of action, the dangers we have just pointed out are considerably increased.

[68] *Prol. Sent.*, q. 4.

[69] Scheeben, *Dogmatik*, Vol. I, sec. 79, n. 278.

the manifestation of being in the plenitude of its real form." The thirty-eighth is: "God is the object of the beatific vision inasmuch as He is the author of *ad extra* works." (Denzinger, nn. 1926, 1928.) It is true that Rosmini, in order to safeguard the distinction between the two orders, does not have recourse to the divine liberty, as Scotus does.

But, as we have seen, this recourse is illogical. To distinguish, as the Subtle Doctor does, between natural and supernatural knowledge solely with reference to the *agent* upon whom they depend and not with reference to the *object* by which they are specified, does not sufficiently take into account the doctrine as formulated by the Vatican Council in the following words: "The Catholic Church, with one consent has also ever held and does hold that there is a twofold order of knowledge, distinct both in principle and also in object: in principle, because our knowledge in the one is by natural reason, and in the other by divine faith; in object, because, besides those things to which natural reason can attain, there are proposed to our belief mysteries hidden in God, which unless divinely revealed cannot be known." (Denzinger, n. 1795.)

If it is thought that we have exaggerated the consequences of extreme Realism, let anyone read the twenty-eight propositions of Master Eckhard which were condemned after his death. It will be seen how he returned at certain times, at least in the form of his teaching, to a doctrine peculiarly like that of Parmenides, who said that either creatures are nothing or else they are God.[70]

Such are the principal difficulties which remain in the Scotist

[70] Cf. Denzinger, n. 526: "All creatures are one pure nothing: I do not say that they are a modicum of quiddity or anything, but that they are one pure nothing." Rosmini says: "There is no finite reality: quiddity of finite being is constituted by the limits of finite being, and is negative." Denzinger, nn. 1901, 1902. Eckhard also said: "There is something in the soul which is uncreated and uncreatable" (n. 527). And Rosmini said: "Being which actualizes finite natures united with them, is an excision from God" (n. 1902).

concept of the divine names. The divine simplicity seems to be compromised, and with it the *necessary* distinction between the natural and the supernatural.

However, a slight falsification of the first notion of the mind upon which all others depend, is not without very serious consequences. As St. Thomas says, following Aristotle, at the end of his *De ente et essentia,* "a slight error in the beginning assumes considerable proportions toward the end." Now Scotus, as Cajetan says,[71] takes the opposite view to St. Thomas on almost all the great questions of general metaphysics. Should we be surprised at the consequences which we have just pointed out?

[71] See Cajetan in the prefatory letter to his Commentary on *Pars prima* (Leonine edition), addressed to Cardinal Caraffa: "But John Scotus made it his point on this subject, beyond all others, with pronounced subtlety and copiousness of words, to endeavor to rob almost the whole of this passage of its force." John of St. Thomas (*Cursus theol., Approbatio doctrinae D. Thomae,* disp. 1, a. 3), seeking to show what was the authority of St. Thomas at this time, said however: "Scotus on many points attacked the teaching of St. Thomas, but he did so with much modesty and with no disrespect."

Father Michael de Maria, S.J., in his *Ontologia,* tract. 1, q. 1, a. 5, points out, as well as Capreolus and many historians, such as Vacant, the consequences of the Scotist notion of being, inasmuch as it is opposed to that of St. Thomas: "Certainly the Angelic Doctor, starting from the truth that created beings are really composed of essence and existence, explains the proper concept of being, formed by our intellect, from this that being denotes that which has existence, or that which is. . . . From this St. Thomas infers that God is not in any genus, because being, predicated of God, does not denote quiddity having *existence,* but existence itself identified with quiddity. . . . To this most distinguished doctrine of the Angelic Doctor, which concerns the very fundamentals of metaphysics, and which consequently extends further and fully pervades the whole of philosophy, the findings of Scotistic philosophy are diametrically opposed. *Scotus, indeed, starts from the identity of essence and existence in created beings, and from this he concludes that being* denotes mediately the *praedicamenta* and that *being* is *predicated univocally of God and creatures,* of substance and accident. Which of these two contradictory teachings of St. Thomas and Scotus better and more assuredly corresponds with the truth, each one can sincerely judge for himself, especially if he considers that the subverters of the Christian and Peripatetic-Scholastic Philosophy very seldom appealed to the teachings of Scotus on the univocation of being; on potentiality and act, and on the distinction between beings. But contrary to this, they always held in abhorrence the principles of philosophizing handed down by St. Thomas." We must also say the same of Suarez: "he starts from the identity of essence and existence in created beings."

One understands how Pope Pius X of saintly memory could have written in his encyclical *Pascendi:* "But we warn teachers to bear this well in mind, that great harm is done in deviating ever so little from Aquinas, especially in Metaphysics. *A slight error in the beginning,* to quote the words of Aquinas, *is great in the end.*"

All this has been said without the least animosity and with the respect due to the venerable Duns Scotus. He would obviously be the first to reject the Pantheistic and Naturalistic consequences which seem to us to follow as a necessity from his doctrine of univocation if this univocation is not merely a question of words. Let us say with him, when without irreverence he departed from the teachings of St. Thomas, that, "in choosing or shunning an opinion one must not be influenced by love or hatred for the person holding such an opinion, but rather by the truth itself. Therefore we must love both, *i. e.,* those whose opinion we follow and those whose opinion we shun, because both are of use in the search for truth. Therefore it is right to say: Thanks." [72]

Contemporary Scotists avoid, moreover, the inconveniences we have just mentioned in proportion as they reconcile—and they are doing so more and more—the univocation of Scotus with the analogy of St. Thomas.

Suarez, as he does in most other instances, seeks a middle course between St. Thomas and Scotus. Like the good eclectic that he is, he applies in philosophy and theology the maxim that *in medio stat virtus* (virtue is the golden mean). He determines this mean, guided perhaps less by speculative principles than by the opposite opinions which practically are taught in the Schools. Is there not some element of truth in these two contrary opinions, since they are held and impressed upon us as facts? We must complete the one by the other and find an intermediate one, unless we are

[72] *Exposition in Metaph. Arist.,* Bk. XII, sec. 2, n. 56, quoted in the preface to Garcia, *De rerum principio,* p. xcv.

willing to risk displeasing all those whom we wish to conciliate. At times Suarezian wisdom seems less concerned with the rigor of metaphysics than with the flexibility of prudence, seeming to forget at certain moments that the mean of speculative intellectual virtues consists in conformity with objective reality and not in conformity with our intention, however upright this may be.[73] Theological eclecticism takes its good where it finds it. It entails the vast labor of bringing together the diverse Scholastic doctrines and striking a sort of mean between the conflicting opinions. This made it possible for Bossuet to say of Suarez that "he voices the opinion of every School." But, in wishing always to find the just mean between the rival systems, he seems to have gone to excess, by sometimes making this mean to be, as it were, the criterion of truth. For this reason, because error is constantly opposed to truth, we would have to seek for a just mean between the two; and because evil is the perpetual foe of good, we would be obliged, as a certain Liberalism wishes, to stick to the mediocre. There is nothing farther from the thought of the celebrated Jesuit. But is it disparaging for St. Thomas to have found in Scotus someone to contradict him, and is his doctrine false or incomplete because it was attacked by another system? Suarez was not less esteemed, as even his adversaries admit, for he, too, encountered a very penetrating theologian. If he did not find a *via media,* firm, secure, and certain, between Thomism and Scotism, that is because there is no such way.

In his *Disputationes metaphysicae* (disp. 2, sec. 2), Suarez treats of the unity of the notion of being; of the analogy between divine

[73] Cf. St. Thomas, Ia IIae, q. 64, a. 3: Whether the intellectual virtues observe the mean. "The good of an intellectual virtue is the *true;* in the case of contemplative virtue, it is the *true* taken *absolutely;* in the case of practical virtue, it is the *true in conformity with a right appetite.* . . . Accordingly, the *good of speculative intellectual virtue consists in a certain mean, by way of conformity with things themselves,* in so far as the intellect expresses them as being what they are, or as not being what they are not."

and created being (disp. 28, sec. 3); of being common to substance and accident (disp. 32, sec. 2). We cannot give here a full explanation of the opposition between the Suarezian and the Thomist notions of being. This has been well done by A. Martin (art. "Suarez métaphysicien et théologien" in *Science catholique,* July and September, 1898);[74] finally, Del Prado devotes more than fifty pages to this question in his fine work entitled, *De veritate fundamentali philosophiae christianae.*

In conclusion, Suarez strives to refute Scotism by Thomism, and Thomism by Scotism; then, when he himself seeks to find a middle way, he is continually buffeted between these two systems.

First of all, he rejects the Scotist univocation because, as the Thomists say, being would be a genus, and because God and creatures would not differ as beings (cf. disp. 2, sec. 5, nn. 5, 10; disp. 28, sec. 3, n. 7).

Besides, Suarez is not satisfied with the analogy of proportionality, for the reason that Scotus gives, in that the notion of being would not have sufficient unity (cf. disp. 28, sec. 3, nn. 9, 11). In his opinion, the objective concept of being cannot contain actually and implicitly the various modes of being (disp. 2, sec. 2, n. 20).[75]

[74] The views of A. Martin as set forth in this work reappeared in the author's article entitled "Essence," written for the *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique,* under the name of "Michel."

[75] Father Delmas, S.J., who usually follows Suarez, thus defines his position: "Suarez with many others teaches that the concept of being *purely prescinds* from the peculiar modes of being of other beings; so that such a concept, in what is properly implied by *such being, actually* contains none of its subordinates, although it represents *indeterminately* all subordinates and all their modes, in so far as they agree in the common notion of being, in a word, in so far as they are beings." Delmas, *Metaphysica,* p. 61. Also Frick, S.J., *Ontologia,* n. 23.

According to the Suarezians, we should have to define analogues as follows: Analogues are such as have a common name, but the meaning signified by the name is *relatively speaking different* and *absolutely speaking the same.* But according to this, the genus animal would be an analogue, for in man and the worm it is *absolutely speaking the same and relatively speaking different.*

On the contrary, the Thomists say: "Analogues are such as have a common

Are we not thus brought back to univocation which from the very first was rejected? How can being still be *essentially varied?* Suarez perceives the difficulty and goes so far as to write (disp. 2, sec. 2, n. 34) as follows: "What I have just said of the unity of the concept of being is far clearer and more certain than the analogy of being; in defending analogy one must not deny the unity of the concept; but if anything had to be denied, it would be rather analogy which is uncertain, than the untiy of the concept which is a demonstrated fact." [76]

However, Suarez maintains an intrinsic analogy of attribution between the divine Being and created beings (disp. 28, sec. 3, n. 16); the creature is being by participation, and God is essentially being; the creature merely participates in being inasmuch as it is dependent upon God and is subordinate to Him. Very good; but how then can anyone maintain the absolute unity of the concept of being? [77] It is clear that being by participation differs from what is essentially being, by reason of *its very actuality,* and therefore, *in so far precisely as it is* being and even in so far as it *is opposed to nothingness,* it is in a way contingent and not necessary. They do not both *exist* in the same way. The actuality of the two is *essentially different.* Can there be in this difference any other similarity than that of proportion, which is the only one admitted by St. Thomas? Cf. *De veritate,* q. 2, a. 11.

In order to safeguard the absolute unity of the notion of being, does Suarez admit with Scotus that in God being is formally

name, but the meaning signified by the name is *absolutely speaking different* in them, *though relatively speaking the same,* that is, according to some proportion." Goudin, *Logica major,* Part I, disp. 1, q. 1, a. 1.

[76] "Now I merely assert that everything which has been said concerning the unity of the concept of being, appears to be clearer and more certain than that being is analogous. Therefore, in order to defend analogy, it is not right to deny the unity of the concept; but *if one of the two must be denied,* it is *analogy which is uncertain* that is to be denied, rather than unity of concept, which seems to be demonstrated by sound arguments." Disp. 2, sec. 2, n. 34.

[77] This is how we translate *praescindit simpliciter,* which sums up the view of Suarez. Cf. Delmas, *loc. cit.*

and actually distinct from other absolute perfections? No; on this point he follows St. Thomas. But, although he does not posit in God a real distinction, he denies a real distinction between essence and existence in creatures.[78] Does not this in a way tend to destroy the distinction between the created and the uncreated? Scotus brings God nearer to the creature; Suarez, the creature nearer to God. Whatever he may say, we cannot but maintain that what primarily distinguishes created from uncreated being is the relation of dependence of the former upon the latter. This relation of dependence necessarily arises from the very nature of created being whose essence is not existence. Because it is not self-existent, it depends upon another. This relation of dependence does not constitute its nature, its entity.[79] It is even impossible to conceive of being by participation, of which Suarez speaks, without distinguishing in it what participates and what is participated, what limits and what is limited, essence and existence. (See Del Prado, *op. cit.*, pp. 170–178.) On all these fundamental points Suarez manifestly abandons St. Thomas,[80] and is more on the side of Scotus. The

[78] How could a well-known controversialist write in these latter days that "we must be very careful not to confound with legitimate and necessary Thomism this distinction defended by Cajetan and his school?" How can he see in it "the danger of this theory being connected with the idealism of Le Roy?"

One might as well say that this real distinction leads to modernist Pantheism, when it is a positive refutation of it. Long before Cajetan, St. Thomas expressly said (Ia, q. 7, a. 1 ad 3um): "The fact that the being of God is self-subsisting, *not received in any other,* and is thus called infinite, shows Him to be distinguished from all other beings, and all others to be apart from Him." In the *De potentia,* q. 3, a. 3 ad 17, he says: *"God in giving a thing its essence produces that which the essence receives."* And in the *De veritate* (q. 27, a. 1 ad 8um) he says: "Everything which is in the genus of substance is composite, being a *real composite* at least of essence and existence." These same expressions constantly recur in the works of St. Thomas. See Del Prado's work on this subject and also that of Father Mattiussi, S.J., entitled, *Distinzione fra l'essenza e l'essere.*

[79] Cf. St. Thomas, Ia, q. 44, a. 1 ad 1um: "Though the relation to its cause is not part of the definition of a thing caused, still it follows as a consequence on what belongs to its essence; because from the fact that a thing has being by participation, it follows that it is caused."

[80] As Martin, *op. cit.*, says: "Suarez in this completely contradicts, if not himself, at least most certainly St. Thomas. . . . In short, on the theory of universal

identity of essence and existence in creatures always brings him back to univocation of being admitted by the Subtle Doctor, "and perhaps without suspecting it, he reproduces his theories." (Cf. Martin, *op. cit.*) We have already pointed out the dangers of this univocation. It compromises the infinite distinction prevailing between the natural and the supernatural.

Suarez seems to escape these difficulties only by continually wavering between Scotus and St. Thomas. This movement to and fro does not seem to conform sufficiently to the rules of logic to permit us to look upon the Suarezian doctrine as a system.

Everything conspires, then, to make us say that there is here no possibility of a *via media* between Scotus and St. Thomas. *Being as such either does or does not actually imply essential variety;* in this *it is* (*actu implicite*) or *is not essentially varied.* If it is not, the differential modes of being are not being; they are nothing. Hence being *cannot be diversified,* and we must come logically to the absolute Monism of Parmenides and declare that all multiplicity is an illusion. This is what St. Thomas said with great depth of thought in refuting this primitive form of Pantheism. Cf. *Metaphysica,* I, ch. v, lect. 9: *"In this Parmenides was deceived, in that he used the term 'being' as if it were* ONE IN MEANING AND NATURE, *as genus is.* But this is impossible. For being is not a genus, but *is predicated in various ways of diverse things."* If, then, the notion of being were absolutely one, we should have to accept the conclusion of Parmenides, because, as St. Thomas says here, "We cannot conceive of anything which accrues to the notion of being by which it would be diversified; for that which accrues

being he seems to have preferred the subtleties of Scotus to the clear and simple doctrine of St. Thomas. . . . If, then, the metaphysics of Suarez separates on this point from that of St. Thomas, totally differing from it on the main topics, it stands to reason that we shall be astonished to see Suarez proposed to us as a sure and faithful commentator of St. Thomas."

Suarez seems even to forget here what the Fourth Lateran Council said: "The similarity between the Creator and the creature cannot be so great as not to find a greater dissimilarity between them." Denzinger, 432.

to being is extraneous to it. But what is of this kind is nothing."

This solution of St. Thomas appears so necessary that it seems the disciples of Scotus and also those of Suarez are more and more inclined to accept it. So it is that several Suarezians, such as Father Frick, S.J. (*Ontologia,* nn. 6, 7), and Father Delmas, S.J. (*Metaphysica generalis,* n. 49), demand for the concept of being only an imperfect unity, and it is not impossible to find texts of Suarez in support of this interpretation.

There would no longer be any differences on this question if it were not necessarily connected with the problem of the real distinction between essence and existence in creatures.

Since Scotus and Suarez did not perceive the radical difference between the analogue and the univocal, and since they did not realize that the unity of the concept of being is only one of proportionality, they could admit only that essence still belongs to being if it is but a real potentiality which receives and limits existence. On the contrary, this presents no difficulty if we grasp well the fact that being is analogous and applies in quite a different way to potentiality and act.

Both Scotus and Suarez, since they do not admit a real distinction between essence and existence in creatures, deprived themselves of the most typical example of analogy of proportionality between God and creatures. It is clear, indeed, that there can be only similarity of proportions between the being of creatures composed of potentiality and act, and the being of God who is pure Act.[81]

Thus is verified what we affirmed at the beginning of the second part of this work, when treating of what formally consti-

[81] St. Thomas (*De potentia,* q. 7, a. 7) says: "The various ways in which things are related to *existence* prevent one from *predicating being of them univocally.* But God's relation to existence is different from that of any creature; for He is His own existence, which applies to no creature. Hence in no way is being predicated univocally of God and the creature; and consequently neither is any of the predicables, among which is the very first being."

tutes the divine nature (n. 44), which is that there is an intimate connection between the two fundamental theses of Thomistic ontology: (1) That being is analogous with reference to God and creatures, according to an analogy of proportionality; (2) That God alone is Being itself, and that in creatures there is a real distinction between essence and existence.

The unity of the primary notions common to God and creatures is therefore only a unity of proportionality. Hence the perfections expressed by them can exist formally in God and are identical in Him. Thus is safeguarded the knowability of God and also His ineffability which results from His transcendence and absolute simplicity.

By the light of this general doctrine of the identification of the divine attributes it will be possible for us to solve the special antinomies relative to liberty. The difficulties which they present oblige us to discuss them somewhat at length.

CHAPTER IV

The Special Antinomies Relating to Freedom

Of all the antinomies brought against us by Agnosticism, the most difficult to solve seem to be those relating to freedom. First of all, how are we to reconcile either divine or human free will with the principle of sufficient reason, which, as we have seen, is the foundation for the proofs of God's existence? If all that is, has its sufficient reason, a determining sufficient reason without which the determination of what comes into existence would remain unexplained and unintelligible, must we not admit that the free act itself must have a determining sufficient reason? And how is it free under this determination? If to avoid Determinism we maintain that the free act of itself has no determining sufficient reason, we conceive of it, it seems, as an absolute beginning. But this is practically a denial of the necessity and universality of the principle of sufficient reason, which is the foundation for the proofs of God's existence.

To safeguard the validity of reason and its first principles, some Intellectualists, such as Spinoza, thought they must deny both divine and human freedom.

To safeguard freedom and along with it morality, some Voluntarists, such as Renouvier and Secrétan, thought they must deny the necessity or objectivity of the first principles of reason.

There are other antinomies connected with this principal one: How can we reconcile the freedom of God with His wisdom and immutability? How can we reconcile human freedom with God's foreknowledge and movement of all things? Above all, how are we to reconcile moral evil or sin with the divine motion?

For a full realization of the importance of the problem, we will briefly explain the thesis of Absolute Intellectualism and also that of Libertism; they correspond more or less to the two parts of the third antinomy of Kant.

59) *Statement of the problem; absolute Intellectualism and Libertism, the third antinomy of Kant*

Absolute Intellectualism is to be found especially in the works of Spinoza, who applies the mathematical method to all the sciences. As mathematics considers neither efficient nor final causes, nor sensible qualities, Spinoza denies the reality of efficiency properly so called, of finality, and of sensible qualities, and admits such a conformity of mathematical reason with being that it makes him completely deny contingency and free will. Everything exists because of the quite geometrical necessity of the divine nature, without any choice on the part of God.

Hegel in his Panlogism goes so far as to say that the real and the rational are identical, what is and what must be, the accomplished fact and right, success and morality. But thus to reduce every contingent fact to the necessity of rational laws, he is obliged to change the meaning of these laws. For him the principle of contradiction is nothing more than a law of minor logic, of the understanding occupied with abstractions. The law of major logic, of reason and reality, is the identification of contradictories in becoming. Absolute Intellectualism or Panlogism is thus itself identified with anti-Intellectualism which denies the necessity of rational principles.

The Intellectualism of Leibniz, though maintaining the necessity of the principles of contradiction and sufficient reason, strives to find a place for freedom. As a matter of fact, it allows only contingency to remain, and a necessary choice of a *moral necessity*. In God as in man, choice is infallibly determined by the principle of sufficient reason. Leibniz read St. Augustine, St. Thomas,

Bannez, and Alvarez, as well as Molina and Fonseca; he admits with the Thomists that "intelligence is, as it were, the soul of freedom" (*Théod.* III, sec. 228); that freedom presupposes *spontaneity,* which means exemption from all external constraint (sec. 301) and also *indifference;* but he adds: provided we do not understand by indifference anything more than *contingency.*[1] Contingency is the "exclusion of logical or metaphysical necessity" (sec. 288), but not the exclusion of moral necessity which belongs properly to understanding and which inclines infallibly though without necessity (sec. 310). According to Leibniz, the last practical judgment which terminates a deliberation is indifferent to what is meant by contingent. This is equivalent to saying that the contrary or at least the contradictory judgment is *possible,* or does not imply a contradiction. But it is not indifferent in this sense, that the contrary or the contradictory judgment would be compatible with the external circumstances and the internal dispositions in which one finds oneself in the act of judging. To admit this compatibility, to admit that in the same circumstances a man can at one time act and at another time not act or act differently, is, according to Leibniz, a denial of the principle of sufficient reason, because that principle requires that nothing happen without a determining reason for it. He says further: "Without this great principle we should never be able to prove the existence of God and we should lose a vast number of very exact and very useful reasonings which ultimately rest upon this principle. It suffers no exception, otherwise its force would be weakened. There is

[1] "So far we have enumerated the two conditions of freedom of which Aristotle speaks, *i. e., spontaneity* and *intelligence,* which are found united in us in deliberation, whereas the second condition is wanting to beasts. But the Scholastics require still a third condition which they call *indifference.* And we must admit it if *indifference* means as much as *contingency;* for I have already said that freedom must exclude an absolute and metaphysical or logical necessity." *Théod.,* III, sec. 302; I, sec. 46.

also nothing so weak as those systems in which everything is unstable and replete with exceptions." (*Théod.*, I, sec. 84.)

The last practical judgment that terminates a deliberation is therefore not absolutely necessary, like a geometrical conclusion—in that Leibniz differs from Spinoza—but it is necessary, he says, with a moral necessity in virtue of the principle of sufficient reason or that of the better. In such determined circumstances it cannot at the same time be better to act and better not to act; in one and the same situation there can be only one better, not two. And if one judges that it is better to act, the circumstances being the same, one cannot effectively abandon this judgment and judge that it is better not to act. "Everything is certain and predetermined in man as in everything else, and the human soul is a kind of spiritual automaton" *Théod.*, I, sec. 52. This is what is called Psychological Determinism.

If that is true, our activity seems to be no more than a series of acts or phenomena, the connection between them being governed by the laws of association of ideas when we do not reflect, but by the principle of sufficient reason when we do reflect. Can the rational automaton be called a person, is it really master of its acts, *sui juris?* Is it not rather a part of the universe, a group of phenomena lost in the immense series? Is it not rather limited to the transmission of the received activity? Is it really the source of its own activity, is it truly endowed with initiative? In spite of being endowed with reason, it is not so much acting as acted upon.

According to the author of *Monadologie,* God, too, finds Himself under the moral necessity of creating rather than not creating; He would be neither good nor wise if He did not create; and of all possible worlds, He is under the moral necessity of choosing the best; therefore the best must exist. Leibniz sees no possible intermediate position between this thesis and that of the Nominalists,

Ockham and Descartes, who make the truth of the principle of contradiction and the first principle of morality depend upon divine freedom. And it is "dishonoring" God, he says, to claim that He has established the distinction between good and evil by a purely arbitrary decree. . . . Why would it not, then, just as well be the Manichaean principle of evil as the orthodox principle of good? [2] (*Théod.*, II, secs. 176 f.)

Consequently Leibniz maintains that God knows future free acts "by the *knowledge of simple intelligence* before He has decreed to give them existence." "From this we see," he says, "that to account for God's foreknowledge, we can do without the *scientia media* of the Molinists and without *Predetermination,* as taught by Bannez and Alvarez, who were very profound writers" (Théod., I, sec. 47). "It is sufficient," says Leibniz, "for the creature to be by its preceding condition inclined more to one side than the other; and all these combinations of actions of the creature and of all creatures were represented in the divine intellect and known to God by the knowledge of simple intelligence before He decreed to give them existence." Such is Psychological Determinism, according to which the principle of sufficient reason imposes an infallibly determining moral necessity upon divine and human freedom.

This doctrine of moral necessity has been held, more or less distinctly, by a rather large number of philosophers both before and after Leibniz. It seemed to many to be the inevitable consequence of the principle of sufficient reason and of that of the subordination of the will to the intellect which directs it. In favor of this

[2] St. Thomas says in equivalent words: "It is blasphemous to hold that the distinction between moral good and evil depends simply upon the free will of God. God would no longer be *essentially* good." Cf. St. Thomas, *De veritate,* q. 23, a. 6 ("Whether justice in created things depends simply upon the will of God."): "To say that justice depends simply upon the will of God, is to say that the divine will does not proceed according to the regulations of wisdom; and this is blasphemous."

thesis Leibniz quotes Plato,[3] and generally those in favor of absolute optimism. Afterwards, *Rosmini* was condemned by the Church for having taught the following proposition: "The love by which God loves Himself even in creatures, and which is the reason determining Him to create, constitutes a *moral necessity,* which in the most perfect being is always productive of an effect: for necessity of this kind only in the majority of imperfect beings leaves intact bilateral freedom" (Denzinger, n. 1908). Contrary to this, the Vatican Council said: "God, of His own goodness and almighty power, not for the increase or acquirement of His own happiness, but to manifest His perfection by the blessings which He bestows on creatures, and with *absolute freedom of counsel,* created out of nothing, from the very first beginning of time, both the spiritual and the corporeal creature, to wit, the angelical and the mundane, and afterwards the human creature as partaking, in a sense, of both, consisting of spirit and of body" (Denzinger, n. 1783). "If anyone shall say that God created, *not by His will, free from all necessity,* but by a necessity equal to the necessity whereby He loves Himself; let him be anathema" (Denzinger, n. 1805).

The Intellectualism and Psychological Determinism of Leibniz which the Church rejected, was followed by a no less excessive voluntarist and libertarian reaction. Between Lebniz and Kant the question at issue is, to know whether we must attribute the supremacy to the will or the intellect. The *third Kantian antinomy* [4] presents the difficulty in sufficiently clear terms.

The thesis of this antinomy shows the necessity of admitting a free causality. According to the antithesis, a free causality is contrary to rational principles.

The *thesis* is formulated by Kant as follows: Causality in con-

[3] Leibniz is mistaken in quoting also Aristotle: cf. *Perihermenias,* Bk. I, ch. ix; St. Thomas' comment., lect. 13–15.

[4] *Critique of Pure Reason* (Transcendental Dialectic; Antinomies of Pure Reason), tr. by Meiklejohn, pp. 252–257.

formity with the laws of nature is not the only kind of causality which can explain all the phenomena in the world. To explain them a free causality must also be admitted. Let it be supposed, indeed, that everything happens in the world according to necessary laws; from this it results that a phenomenon can never be considered as fully determined, for its previous condition presupposes another, and so on indefinitely. We do not therefore arrive at that complete determination demanded by the natural law. To satisfy this law the series of causes must therefore be complete, final; it must start from a cause which has no need of being previously determined; it must start from a free cause.

The *antithesis* maintains, on the contrary, that there is no such thing as freedom and that everything in the world happens solely according to the laws of nature. Granted, indeed, that there is such a thing as free causality, capable of commencing of itself a whole series of connected actions, you thus introduce incoherence into nature and break the unity of experience which demands that all phenomena be interconnected, without any possible gap, by a relation of antecedents and consequents. We must therefore keep to natural necessity and exclude a freedom which introduces disorder into the world and knowledge which is contrary to the principle of sufficient reason and to that of causality.

We know that Kant solved this antinomy by distinguishing between the phenomenal and the intelligible. Certain human actions which, for our senses, are embodied in the inflexible chain of physical causality, can at the same time proceed from a free causality situated in the world of things in themselves. There would thus be "a causality the effects of which (*wirkung*) are to be met with in the world of phenomena, although it is not itself a phenomenon." [5] Man can discover by his own reasoning a motive capable of determining his conduct independently of all sensuous impulses.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 303.

Kant himself avows that this conception "must appear in the highest degree subtle and obscure." We do not see, indeed, how it solves the difficulty, if the principle of sufficient reason is applied both to the intelligible and the phenomenal world of things. Moreover, are not the things in themselves determined by the divine causality? And how can moral action be necessary in so far as it is a phenomenon, and free in so far as it is a transcendent determination? [6]

Without succeeding in finding a place for freedom in the order of phenomena, Kant subordinated metaphysics to morality and thus admitted the principle of Voluntarism. This voluntarist idea prepared the way for him.

The system of Fichte may be called a philosophy of freedom. The absolute is not that which is, but that which must be; and that which must be is freedom. In the philosophy of his last years, quite in opposition to Hegel, Schelling puts the will above reason. Schopenhauer declares the living will to be superior to this Hegelian logic which he considers only a series of abstractions.

Lequier and Secrétan strive, each in his own way, to submit all philosophical problems to this mooted question. Both of them, after the manner of Kant, subordinate metaphysics to morality. The Intellectualist and Voluntarist theses are pushed to their ultimate or so-called ultimate consequences. Is it not true that Intellectualism, which posits as a principle the subordination of the will to the intellect, must admit that all the steps in willing are predetermined by the intellect? Must we not return to the old doctrine of Socrates and Plato, that virtue is a science: that when anybody does what is morally wrong, he does so through ignorance or, as Spinoza said, because of a failure to form clear ideas for himself? Does not Intellectualism normally end in the negation of free will?

According to these same philosophers, if we wish to bring

[6] Cf. Ruyssen, *Kant*, p. 204.

back freedom we must in the end reject the absolute necessity of first principles as laws of being, subordinate in all cases intelligence to volition, at least in God, and say with Descartes that if the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles and if there are no mountains without valleys, this is because God willed it to be so. According to Secrétan[7] and Lequier,[8] if we do not put freedom in the first place, it has no place anywhere; if it is not everything, it is nothing. Necessity is the result of abstractions of the mind. As Descartes said, God is absolute freedom. That being admitted, Secrétan does not hesitate to sacrifice divine foreknowledge to free will: God wills to be ignorant of future free acts. Lequier, though claiming to remain faithful to Catholicism and to infuse new life into theology, also denies divine foreknowledge.[9] Do not certain contemporary apologists still cherish the ambition of the author of *La recherche d'une première vérité* to make "freedom the fundamental dogma of Catholicism"? [10]

There are many philosophers who have declared themselves

[7] Secrétan writes as follows: "Long ago I admitted that freedom and necessity are the supreme dilemma. Long ago I said that, in favoring divine freedom, my main purpose was to give a reason for human freedom, the reason for which, in my opinion, is based on the authority of duty." *La philosophie de la liberté*, 2d ed., I, 370. Absolute being, if it is to be *ratio sui* or *causa sui*, must be absolute freedom, freedom to be free. "Being substance, it gives itself existence; being alive, it gives itself substance; being a spirit, it gives itself life; being absolute, it gives itself freedom. . . . The finite spirit is both spirit and matter, and not merely spirit. The perfection of spirit would be to be pure spirit, without matter. Pure spirit is only what it is, *i.e.*, absolute freedom. . . . *I am what I will.* This formula is therefore the factotum." *Ibid.*, pp. 361–364.

[8] Lequier: "Fundamental truth has been confided to the keeping of human conscience. It is in the ardor of the strife between passion and duty that we contemplate face to face the two terms of the alternative which constitutes its essence." *La Recherche d'une première vérité* (*fragments posthumes*), pp. 82–85. Cf. *Revue philosophique*, 1898, p. 139.

[9] "God Himself has restricted His knowledge concerning our acts; He could not have consented to create man free without consenting to be ignorant at least of the use that man would make of his free will." Lequier, *ibid.*, pp. 214–216.

[10] It is the title of Book VIII of *La Recherche d'une première vérité.*

more or less completely in favor of this libertarian solution.[11] Charles Renouvier and the neo-critics have brought up again in its defence all the arguments of the Pyrrhonists: that nothing is certain, and that every affirmation is a free belief. For a long time the neo-critics have led us back to the famous dilemma by which Lequier thought he could prove that we must choose freely between necessity and freedom, both of them impossible of demonstration. It is frequently said that freedom and necessity cannot rule with equal authority; we must choose between the two. Charles Renouvier decided freely in favor of freedom, because it makes the least demand upon truth and gives the greatest result: (1) It is the foundation of knowledge; for knowledge is the result of an act of free will; for, even considered in detail, no propo-

[11] Boutroux writes as follows: "In God power or freedom is infinite; it is the source of His existence which, in a way, is not subject to the restraint of fatality. The *divine essence,* coeternal with His power, is actual perfection. *It is necessary, being a practical necessity,* which means that it *deserves absolutely to be realized,* and can be itself only if it is *freely realized.*" *Contingence des lois de la nature,* 2d ed., p. 156.

Brochard (*De l'erreur,* 2d ed., p. 265) writes: "To say that everything in the world is the object of knowledge, or, what comes to the same, that everything is subject to the law of causality, is to depict the world solely under the form of thought, which means that thought is the measure of being. But what right have we thus to settle the question and eliminate what has been given us on the same grounds as that which is preferred? Moreover, this makes it impossible for anyone who takes this stand to explain free will which exists, at least in virtue of outward appearances, to say nothing of the problem of error, which, as we have seen is impossible of solution on this hypothesis. . . . True, at first sight it is peculiarly bold to admit the existence of an irreducible and, as the Germans say, *illogical* element to thought. However, this conception enjoys certain advantages over the preceding. Besides, *whereas Intellectualism cannot find any place for free will, the philosophy of freedom can find a place for necessity.* . . . There is nothing in existence which is not intelligible; but it is not enough that a thing be intelligible for it to be real; it must yet be realized by a principle other than the idea, *i. e.,* by the will. Furthermore, the will is not determined by the intellectual or aesthetic validity of ideas. It is not the essence of things, but the intelligible united with the will that constitutes the intelligible. We must find a place for the illogical alongside the logical element; in simpler words, we must supplement Intellectualism by the philosophy of freedom."

sition claimed to be proved is absolutely certain; (2) It makes morality possible, since without it one cannot conceive of duty. It cannot be a question of proving the existence of this duty; but it is one's duty to believe freely in duty. "I refrain," Lequier said, "from the pursuit of a work of knowledge which would not be mine. I embrace the certitude of which I am the author. *The formula of knowledge is doing. It is not becoming but doing, and in doing to become.* . . . Freedom is the condition which renders possible the imperfect and admirable work of human knowledge, and the work of duty which results from it. This is enough perhaps to assure us that it is not a vain conception of our pride." [12]

This thesis is nowadays pressed to its ultimate conclusions by the representatives of the "new philosophy," Bergson and his disciples Le Roy and Wilbois. Truth is essentially variable; it is freely realized and freely accepted. "The mind is never confronted but by itself, its degrees and moments. The world is its work and it, too, in so far as it is realized, is still its work. In that way, Idealism is truth; I mean the Idealism of thought-action." [13] *Thought-action* "is founded upon itself and does not presuppose anything. . . . In fact, only thought-action is capable of being self-sufficient. Nothing is posited before it, since nothing is posited except by it. *It is a positing of itself. If one takes it to be the fundamental reality,* it becomes freedom, for there is nothing that conditions it; on the contrary, everything is connected with it. Hence it really seems like a starting-point, a first beginning." [14] You would think you were reading a translation from Fichte with this difference, however, that Fichte, far less paradoxical than Le Roy, thus defines the absolute and universal, and not the individual ego. According to the new philosophy, "axioms and categories, forms of the under-

[12] Lequier, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

[13] Le Roy, *Bulletin de la Société française de philosophie*, 1904, p. 166. [Recently Le Roy made his submission to the Holy See, retracting anything he may have written which is contrary to the teaching of the Church. Tr.]

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 162.

standing or sense perception, all these are submitted to the process of becoming, of evolution. The human mind is plastic and can change its most intimate desires." [15]

The freedom which Bergson admits is nothing else, however, than absolute spontaneity. The free act is that "which emanates from the ego and only from the ego, to the exclusion of any external influence whatever." [16] This doctrine is, in certain respects, reminiscent of Hume who no more believes in freedom in the proper sense of the term than he does in necessity. According to Bergson, freedom is not the power to decide between two alternatives; there is no active indifference between two possible choices; but "if our action seemed free to us, it is because the relation of this action to the state from which it came could not be expressed by a law, this psychic state being unique of its kind and no more needing ever to reproduce itself." [17] "You do not bathe twice in the same river," said Heraclitus, and from this point of view should we be surprised that freedom is everywhere? John Weber, who appeals to Bergson, himself admits: "They have criticized this theory, not without some show of reason, in that it escapes the difficulties (of free will) by an arbitrary definition. I call free every act that I accomplish; then I am free, since all my acts, according to the definition, are free." [18]

Weber also deduces the moral consequences of the Libertarian and anti-Intellectualist theory of Bergson. These consequences form the most radical kind of unmorality. This conclusion, previously quoted by us (*supra*, n. 21), will bear repetition here:

[15] Le Roy, *Revue de métaphysique et de morale*, 1901, p. 305. Cf. *Etudes* March 1907; "La notion de vérité dans la philosophie nouvelle," by J. de Tonquédec.

[16] *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience*, ch. iii, pp. 132–138 and 140–151.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 181.

[18] *Revue de mét. et de mor.*, 1894, p. 539. Maritain, in his recent work (*La Philosophie bergsonienne*, pp. 263–276), shows clearly how freedom, such as Bergson conceives it, is nothing but spontaneity.

"Morality, in planting itself on a terrain from which invention grows in all its vigor, immediately and full of life, in manifesting itself as the most insolent encroachment of the realm of the intellect upon spontaneity, was fated to encounter the continual contradictions of that undeniable reality of dynamism and creation which is our activity. . . . Confronted with these morals of ideas, we outline morality, or, more correctly, the unmorality of the act. . . . We call 'good' whatever has triumphed. If the success is fierce and implacable, if the vanquished are completely defeated, destroyed, abolished beyond hope, then success justifies everything. . . . The man of genius is profoundly immoral; but for anyone to be immoral is not the proper thing. In this world of egoisms which are strangers to one another, 'duty' is nowhere in particular, yet it is everywhere, for all actions possess absolute value. . . . The act is a law unto itself, the whole law. . . . The repentant sinner deserves all the anguish of his contrite soul, because he was not strong enough to transgress the law, and unworthy to be a sinner. The criminal still at large, who is tortured by remorse of conscience and gives himself up and confesses his crime, deserves punishment, for he was not strong enough to bear with undisturbed mind the terrible weight of crime." [19]

The philosophers of freedom had to end in such radical nihilism. With Bergson and Le Roy, as Jacob remarked, not only have we no more truth and necessity in the Kantian sense, but neither truth nor necessity in the Spencerian sense: "Here every intellectual norm disappears or ceases to be anything else but an artifice, an unfaithful symbol which betrays what it symbolizes and which cannot be called a true lie, *ἀληθινὸν ψεῦδος*." [20]

We see that the anti-Intellectualism of the champions of the "New Philosophy" again unites with the absolute Intellectualism

[19] *Revue de mét. et de mor.*, 1894, pp. 549–560.

[20] Jacob, "La Philosophie d'hier et celle d'aujourd'hui," in *Revue de mét. et de mor.*, 1898, p. 181.

of Hegel. These extreme systems coincide and ought to, for both admit the formula of their common father, Heraclitus, that: "everything is and is not, nothing is, all is becoming." From this point of view, necessity and freedom are identical. Hegel reduced the real to the rational, fact to right; the anti-Intellectualists reduce the rational to the real, right to "accomplished fact." Both must grant that success is at the same time truth and goodness. There is no need of saying that might exceeds right; it is right. These two extreme doctrines are the ruination of all morality; absolute Intellectualism suppresses it, because it denies freedom; Libertism, devised to safeguard it, likewise suppresses it because it denies the absolute character of truth and declares itself powerless to establish duty on a solid basis.

Frankly, we do not believe that the problem of free will has made much progress in modern times. Too often people have delighted in dramatic antitheses which seduce the imagination and deceive one with an appearance of profundity; too often also, in claiming to define *univocally* what is of the very essence of being by one of these two terms: intelligence or will. Moreover, the modern philosophers have not always sufficiently profited by the researches of their predecessors concerning the relations between the will and the object by which it is specified. Occasion, too, will be afforded us of showing that the division of the faculties which has become classic since the time of Kant and the Eclectics (intellect, sense perception, and will), a division which implies the abandonment of the traditional definition of the will (that it is a rational appetite), has led modern philosophers to eliminate in the problem of free will the very principle of its solution, namely, this formal object of the will, goodness under this aspect, or its adequate object, universal goodness.

Contemporary philosophers still need, we think, to profit by the speculations of Aristotle and St. Thomas, by the synthesis realized by this "Christian philosophy," which Boutroux recently

declared to be "so complete, so precise, so logical, so firmly established in its least details that it seemed for ever unchangeable." [21] Could freedom be eliminated from such a synthesis constructed by theologians from the Intellectualist point of view? The Church affirms the existence of divine and human freedom as well as the absolute character of truth and the nature of God. Every Catholic theologian, even Scotus, must admit with Leibniz, against Ockham and Descartes, that it is *"dishonoring"* God to claim that He "established the distinction between good and evil by a purely arbitrary decree. . . . Why would it not then just as well be the Manichaean principle of evil as the orthodox principle of good?" (*Théod.*, II, secs. 176, 177.) Besides, the Church affirms the absolute freedom of the creative act: "God, with *absolute freedom of counsel,* created out of nothing, from the very first beginning of time, both the spiritual and corporeal creature."—Vatican Council, Sess. III, ch. i. She likewise affirms the free will of man in her doctrine on merit and demerit and the just punishments of God. It has been defined, at least since the condemnation of Jansenism, that spontaneity alone (freedom from coercion) does not suffice for meriting.[22]

Hence it is particularly interesting to study a speculative theologian on this question, since he cannot think of sacrificing either of these two terms: truth and freedom; he is forced to reconcile them. It is a remarkable thing that, contrary to the majority of contemporary philosophers, St. Thomas not only claims to remain faithful to the principle of Intellectualism, but also claims to derive freedom in the true sense from reason itself. That is what we

[21] Boutroux, art. "Aristote," in the *Grande Encyclopédie;* and *Etudes d'histoire de la philosophie,* p. 202.

[22] Innocent XII and Alexander VII condemned as heretical the following proposition of Jansenius: "For meritorious and demeritorious acts in the state of fallen nature, there is not required in man freedom from necessity; freedom from coercion is sufficient." Denzinger, n. 1094.

should like to explain. Thus we see the true character of Thomist Intellectualism and in what it differs from Absolute Intellectualism.

The difficulty of the problem of freedom was certainly realized by those who lived in the Middle Ages. St. Thomas gives an Intellectualistic solution, defending the principle that the will follows the direction of the intellect. That given by Duns Scotus was Voluntarist, implying the primacy of the will.[23] Suarez, who in most cases seeks a middle course between Scotus and St. Thomas, claims to uphold the superiority of intellect over will, while maintaining with Molina that the will is not in all its acts directed by the intellect [24] and that, confronted by two choices equally good, the will can, without any motive proposed to it by the intellect, choose one and leave the other. The freedom of indifference thus becomes for Suarez and Molina a freedom of equilibrium; there may be an unmotived preference.

To solve the principal antinomy relating to free will, we will examine in the first place how, according to St. Thomas, free will results from intelligence; after that we will consider how it is reconciled with the principle of sufficient reason and therefore with divine wisdom. It will then be easier to defend the reconciliation of the freedom of God with His immutability, and of human freedom with the divine motion. The problem of freedom, stated

[23] Scotus (IV Sent., dist. 49, *quaestio ex latere* 4, 5, 16) says: "The will commanding the intellect is higher cause in this respect; but, if the intellect is the cause of volition, it is a cause supervening upon the will, as being the first act in the generative order." Hence this explains why, "if two things are presented to the will, although of equal appeal, they are not equally willed." II Sent., dist. 25, q. 18.

[24] Cf. Suarez, *Disp. met.*, XIX, sec. 6: "If the will in all things is guided by the intellect, then there is an end of freedom."

"If the intellect judges this medium to be useful or eligible, even though at the same time it judges another to be useful, the will can choose one of them; neither is it necessary that the intellect should previously decide upon the choice of another, nor that it is to be preferred to another." Suarez, *loc. cit.*, sec. 11.

first on the part of man, is seen in all its force when stated as it concerns God. In spite of the irreparable imperfections of our analogical knowledge, we shall see that God's freedom is incomparably more manifest than man's, though it is not—as Secrétan and, in a certain sense, Descartes would have it to be—that which formally constitutes the divine nature.

60) *Freedom results from intelligence.* "Reason is the radical cause of all liberty." St. Thomas, *De veritate,* q. 24, a. 2.

The philosophy of St. Thomas, considered in its fundamental aspects, shows itself to be a decisively intellectualistic doctrine. We are confronted by a philosophy which maintains the dependence of intellect on being, the ontological validity of the laws of thought, the subordination of practice to theory, of will to intellect; we will only what we know, apprehend as good *nihil volitum nisi praecognitum.* In a general way, in a being endowed with knowledge, appetite follows upon knowledge of good (*Summa Theol.,* Ia, q. 19, a. 1; q. 80, a. 1) and, according as this knowledge is sensible or intellectual, we must distinguish the sensitive appetite (irascible and concupiscible, principle of the passions) from the rational appetite or the will (Ia, q. 80, a. 2). The will appears thus to be rooted in the intellect. *Voluntas consequitur intellectum* (Ia, q. 19, a. 1).

The majority of modern philosophers since the time of Kant and the Eclectics, after adopting the classification of the faculties due to the influence of J. J. Rousseau (intellect, sense perception, will), refuse to identify the rational appetite with the will, and sharply reprove Plato, Aristotle, and Leibniz for having confused them. The principal reason they give in support of their view is that, if the will is confused with the rational appetite, this means the end of freedom, for every appetite is a necessary one. We shall see that, on the contrary, the modern notion of will suppresses the

principle in the solution of the problem of free will and prevents us from seeing that liberty is a result of reason.[25]

Reid, Kant, Cousin, and Renouvier, in striving to show that the will is not an appetite, have claimed that we can will without desiring. This is manifestly contrary to the facts, for every volition presupposes an end, and the notion of an end implies the notion of goodness. The goodness may be either virtuous, useful, or delectable, but it must always be desirable. The will is nothing else but a rational appetite; this is its definition.

Having thus defined the will, we now consider what is its formal and adequate object. It cannot be a certain and determinate good, such or such kind of delectable, useful, or virtuous good; if the will follows upon the intellect, it can tend toward everything in which the intellect will be able to discover the notion of goodness, toward every reality which the intellect will be able to present to the rational being as something good. The formal object of the will is therefore goodness as such: just as the formal object of the intellect is being or the notion of being, which is the foundation of every idea, the soul of every judgment, the connecting link in every process of reasoning: just as the formal object of sight is color, and the formal object of hearing is sound. The eye perceives nothing except in virtue of color, the intellect nothing but in vir-

[25] This is not the only confusion introduced into philosophy by the classification of the faculties of the soul, a classification due to the influence of J. J. Rousseau: intellect, sense perception, and will. Sense perception has taken up a position which it never held before. It was but the ensemble of appetitive faculties directed by the external and internal senses, and *proper to the animal;* to this have been added intellectual, moral, and aesthetic sentiments, the love of truth, goodness, and beauty, religious sentiments which presuppose the intervention of reason and which are *proper to man.* The spontaneous love of truth is the natural appetite of the intellect for its object; the reflex love of truth is an act of the will; the love of goodness and the inclination to love God above all things constitute the substratum of the will (Ia, q. 60, a. 5). This present-day classical division of the faculties is quite superficial, empirical, and phenomenalistic; it isolates facts most intimately related to one another (love of goodness, volition, joys of conscience) and reunites in one class facts that are most diverse in kind (carnal pleasure and the joy of union with God).

tue of being, and the will nothing but in virtue of good; it wills evil only in so far as it finds it to be an apparent good, just as the intellect can conceive nothingness only by comparing it to being. The will can therefore desire or will all that pertains to good, just as the intellect can know all that pertains to being.

But what is of importance here for us clearly to see, is the infinite difference between the *intellectual* and the *sensible* knowledge of good, between the *idea* of good and the *common image* or sensible remembrance of pleasure, a remembrance which the animal has and which cannot be the basis of freedom.

The idea, as we have said (cf. *supra,* nn. 15–18), differs essentially from the common image because it contains the *intrinsic raison d'être* or the essence of what it represents, rendering it intelligible to us, whereas *even the common image,* which by its confusion can simulate the universality of the idea, contains only sensible phenomena in juxtaposition, revealing them to us. The common image of the triangle contains in juxtaposition the sensible phenomena of any triangle, without causing these phenomena to become intelligible to us, without bringing out clearly a dominant trait which would be the *raison d'être* of all the others. The idea of the triangle, on the contrary, reveals to us this essential trait by which all the properties which necessarily follow from it are made intelligible to us.

From this we see what difference there is between the *idea of the good* and the common or confused image simultaneously present in the imagination. This confused image recalls merely the sensation of pleasure associated with the presence of this or that pleasurable object. The idea of the good, on the contrary, tells us what good is; it connects all its notes with a fundamental element, and this element with being which is the first object of our intellect. For everyone, good is that which by its nature arouses in us, by our knowledge of it, desire, love, and hope; when it is present, it causes joy, when absent, sadness; in a general way, it arouses

all the movements of the appetite. Just as all these movements of the appetite spring from love, so all the characteristics of good are derived from one of them; good is that which is capable of exciting love (*bonum est id quod omnia appetunt:* good is what all beings seek for). What is the *raison d'être* of this "appetibility," of this power which good possesses of attracting the appetite? Why does good attract us, why is it desirable? It is because good can increase our being, fill up a void in us, perfect us. But to perfect us it must itself be perfection, *plenitude* of being in which nothing is wanting, capable of diffusing itself. "A thing is desirable only in so far as it is perfect; for all desire their own perfection. But everything is perfect so far as it is actual" (Ia, q. 5, a. 1). "The formal notion of good consists in perfection as constituting the basis of appetibility." [26] As we rise by the principle of *raison d'être* from the multiplicity of beings to the absolute Being, from the multiplicity of truths to the absolute Truth, so we also rise from the multiplicity of goods which are partial and limited, to the supreme Good in whom no absolute perfection can be wanting. He is plenitude of Being.

If, then, the intellect is directed by the will and not by the imagination, the adequate object by which it is specified can be only *good in all its generality, universal good,* to speak from the viewpoint of extension. This will enable the will to rise to the love of the supreme Good, *the absolute, total, or infinite Good* which alone is *adequate* to its vast capacity for loving, which alone, therefore, can give to it the perfect happiness that it seeks; every partial good will be incapable of fully satisfying it (Ia IIae. q. 10, a. 2). "That good alone which is perfect and lacking in nothing is such a good that the will cannot not-will it."

From this definition of the will St. Thomas goes on to deduce liberty, just as a property is deduced from a nature. But as the will has its principle in reason and is directed by this in all acts,

[26] John of St. Thomas, on Ia, q. 5.

we cannot say that liberty is deduced from the definition of the will and not at the same time from reason. "Forasmuch is it necessary that man has a free will, as he is rational" (Ia, q. 83, a. 1). Freedom must manifest itself as a property of rational being. "The radical cause of all liberty is reason" (*De veritate,* XXIV, 2), or, according to a more precise formula: "The root of liberty is the will as the *subject* thereof, but it is the reason as its cause" (Ia IIae, q. 17, a. 1 ad 2). In distinguishing between the radical and the proximate principle either of liberty or of the free act, we shall see: (1) that the radical principle of *liberty,* as being the power of choosing (*potentia ad utrumlibet*), is in reason, in so far as this latter knows what causes the good to be so, and its proximate principle is in the *vast range of the will* which is specified by universal good; (2) that the radical principle of choice or the free act is in the *indifference of the practical judgment* with regard to such particular good, and its proximate principle is in the *dominating indifference of the will* with regard to this same good.[27]

Too often the Thomist proof of liberty is presented without taking into account the radical principle or the immediate condition of choice: the *indifference of the judgment.* One is satisfied in considering the relation which the will, specified by universal good, bears toward a particular and inadequate good, basing the argument on this major: An inadequate object which does not exhaust the capacity of a faculty leaves it in a state of indifference. Presenting the proof in this way, one forgets that the will tends toward an object only if this object is judged to be good, and not sufficient notice is taken of the fact that the modality of the voluntary act depends upon the modality of the judgment. Thus the formal mean in the demonstration of free will is overlooked, making it impossible for oneself to answer the objections of the De-

[27] See John of St. Thomas, *Cursus phil., De anima,* q. 12, a. 1–4; Billuart, *De actibus humanis,* diss. II, a. 1, sec. 3, *multiplex radix libertatis,* and sec. 4, *multiplex definitio libertatis.*

terminists who rely upon the presence in us of indeliberate and inevitable voluntary acts which tend toward particular goods. As a matter of fact, it is only through the absence of indifference in the judgment, as we shall see, that these acts are to be explained.

It is in Ia, q. 19, a. 3; q. 59, a. 3; q. 83, a. 1, that St. Thomas asks himself whether God, angels, and man are free, and deduces the reality of liberty from the presence of intelligence. The same doctrine is more fully developed in *De veritate,* XXIV, 1, 2. Elsewhere (Ia, q. 82, a. 1, 2; Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 2; *De veritate,* XXII, 5, 6), liberty is discussed, not in relation to its cause (the reason), but in relation to its subject (the will). The two aspects of the question are synthesized in the masterly article of the *De malo*, q. 6, a. 1.

The essential element in the argument by which the reality of liberty is deduced from the presence of intelligence, is contained in Ia, q. 83, a. 1. This argument resolves itself into the following syllogism: We are free in the same degree as the practico-practical judgment which regulates our choice is of itself indifferent. Now the judgment of reason is of itself indifferent with regard to particular goods which have no necessary connection, *hic et nunc* evident, with the attainment of complete good. Therefore man, a rational being, is free with regard to these particular goods.

The major of this proof offers no great difficulty. It contains the definition of liberty. A free act is that which the will accomplishes with a *freedom* or a *dominating indifference* such that it is able not to accomplish it; so that, although the circumstances remain exactly the same, the will is able on another occasion to suspend its act and not to act. This dominating indifference of the will is safeguarded if the immediate determining principle of volition is itself indifferent. This principle is the practico-practical judgment which precedes the voluntary choice, being the judgment by which we affirm that such an object *hic et nunc* is good for us and that it is good to will it. This judgment is called practico-practical because it concerns an act viewed in such fully

determined circumstances in which it will be accomplished, in opposition to speculativo-practical judgments (such as the precepts of the moral law), everywhere and always true in themselves, independently of circumstances; for example: that good must be done, that we must do what is right. The purely speculative judgment is that which in no way concerns action; for example, the principle of contradiction, of causality, any sort of judgment on existence.

The practico-practical judgment can be indifferent with an *indifference* either of *specification* or of *exercise*. Its indifference is that of *specification* when it can affirm the fittingness or unfittingness of a certain object loved under one aspect and hated under another (indifference of specification by way of contraries) or again when it can affirm the fittingness of certain means or others which can be preferred to them in view of one and the same end (indifference of specification by way of disparities). Judgment is said to be indifferent with a simple indifference of *exercise* when it can affirm or not affirm the fittingness or goodness of a certain object. Only this latter indifference is required for liberty. To be free with regard to an object, it is not necessary to be able to love or hate it, to be able to prefer it to another, or another to it; it suffices to be able to love it or not to love it. To be master of one's act, it suffices to be able to act or not to act, to go into or refrain from action.

The minor of the argument also needs to be demonstrated. Why is the judgment of reason of itself indifferent with regard to particular goods which have no necessary connection, *hic et nunc* evident, with the attainment of complete good? To explain this St. Thomas compares man with the animal. The animal tends inevitably toward the object which by its instinct is necessarily and automatically presented to it as suitable. Sometimes it seems to be reasoning, but the acts are merely an experienced succession of images subject to the laws of association, the representation re-

maining concrete and individual and never rising to the abstract and the universal. The animal perceives in quite an empirical way that an object is suitable for it at a certain moment and not at a certain other, in proportion as this object does or does not correspond to the concrete and individual actual dispositions of its appetite. Thus it knows some things that are good, without knowing that any one of them is *good,* which means that it does not know their goodness. The intelligent being, on the other hand, compares particular goods which are presented to it with the universal idea of good. This comparison takes place in the syllogism in which the middle term, that must reunite the extremes, is good without any restriction, without admixture of imperfection or of non-good, it being the only object capable of realizing in all its purity this notion of good which our intellect perceives and of making us perfectly happy.[28] It is not necessary for a free act that we distinctly have in mind the *complete* and *absolute good,* which is God; it suffices if reason has the idea of *good in general* and if the will tends naturally to happiness without restriction.[29]

The practical syllogism is formulated as follows in the first figure. The middle, major, and minor terms are indicated.

Good (*Middle*) is what suits me and what I will (*Major*).

Now, a certain particular object, *v. g.,* a life of pleasure (*Minor*), *hic et nunc* is and is not a good, according to the aspect in which I view it (*Middle*).

Therefore this particular object (*Minor*) *hic et nunc* is what

[28] "If the will is offered an object which is *good universally* and *from every point of view,* the will tends to it of necessity, if it wills anything at all, since it cannot will the opposite. If, on the other hand, the will is offered an object that is not good from every point of view, it will not tend to it of necessity. And since lack of any good whatever, is a non-good, consequently *that good alone which is perfect and lacking in nothing, is such a good that the will cannot not-will it: and this is happiness.* Whereas *any other particular goods,* in so far as they are lacking in some good, can be regarded as *non-goods;* and from this point of view, they can be set aside or approved by the will, which can tend to one and the same thing from various points of view" (Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 2).

[29] Cf. Ia, q. 2, a. 1 ad 1um; Ia IIae, q. 1, a. 6.

suits me and also what does not suit me, according to the aspect in which I view it (*Major*).

The conclusion, like the minor, is indifferent. A life of pleasure may be considered *hic et nunc* both from the point of view of its advantages and of its disadvantages. It is the same with duty, for it, too, has two sides, the one by which it appears to be in conformity with our higher faculties, the other which shows it to be in opposition with certain of our lower appetites or certain of our bad habits. God Himself, in this life, can be considered under two contrary aspects: as the sovereign Good, alone capable of filling the infinite void in our heart, and also as legislator imposing upon us precepts which are not fulfilled without effort and suffering, and as a judge punishing those who transgress his commands. We can have speculative certitude of the fact that there is no happiness without virtue and the love of God, and that virtue is a good which in itself is obligatory. This speculative certitude persists even in the case of the sinner and constitutes the element of advertence in sin. But if there is question of a *hic et nunc* practical judgment, that is to say, in certain circumstances and under certain conditions, virtue and the love of God can be considered under two contrary aspects: for we can love God or turn away from Him. Of the two paths of pleasure and of duty which present themselves to one seeking happiness, there is liberty of specification and a fortiori liberty of exercise, so much so that none of these partial goods appears to be in a necessary connection, *hic et nunc* evident, with the attainment of complete good.

We see that the indifference of the practico-practical judgment is due to the vast disproportion that there is in the practical judgment, between the minor and middle terms; the minor term is finite, the middle term, like the major, is infinite. The basis of liberty is therefore in the intellect which perceives the idea of good, and its judgment of it is consequently indifferent as regards every

object and act which is not exempt from every admixture of evil, reluctance, or imperfection.

This derivation of liberty has evidently no meaning unless one admits a natural distinction between the intellect and the senses, between the idea and the image, the universal and the particular. Empirical Nominalism, which denies the specific difference in man, must also deny the property which flows from it. "Forasmuch is it necessary that man has a free will, as he is rational" (Ia, q. 83, a. 1).

St. Thomas, in thus deriving liberty of intellect, assigns to it its *limits*. There is no liberty of specification except with regard to particular goods which have no necessary connection, *hic et nunc* evident, with the attainment of complete good. Thus it is that, as regards happiness, this liberty disappears; [30] under no aspect can happiness displease us or appear insufficient; in this case there is only liberty of exercise, for we can judge that it is suitable or not suitable *hic et nunc* to think of happiness and seek it.[31] Again this liberty of exercise is sufficiently relative, since we cannot desire and will anything whatever without virtually desiring to be happy (Ia IIae, q. 1, a. 6).

And there is not any liberty of specification, at least liberty of contrary specification, with regard to goods which appear evidently *hic et nunc* as an indispensable condition of happiness, namely: existence, life, use of our faculties, "being, living, sensa-

[30] "There is inborn in man a desire of his ultimate end in general, namely, that he naturally desires *to be completely happy*. But in what this consists, whether in virtue or knowledge or pleasure or in anything else of this kind, this is not determined for him by nature." *De veritate*, q. 22, a. 7; Ia, q. 82, a. 1.

[31] "Man of necessity desires happiness which, according to Boethius, consists in the perfect state of the assembly of all good things. I say, however, of necessity, as regards the determination of the act because he cannot will the opposite; but not as regards the exercise of the act because anyone can then not will to think of happiness; *for also the very acts of the intellect and will are particular ones.*" *De malo*, q. 6, a. 1.

tion, understanding" (Ia, q. 82, a. 2; Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 1). Considered in themselves, these goods cannot displease us or seem useless. He who kills himself does not hate life, but only the evils which make it unbearable. We might say that he kills himself only because he wishes, too much so, to enjoy life. With regard to certain of these goods there is only liberty of specification by way of disparities. If the martyr prefers rather to die than to renounce the faith, this is not because life is displeasing; at the very moment in which he sacrifices it, he still loves it by a previous act of the will, just as in another order, says St. Thomas, a merchant, to avoid shipwreck, throws his merchandise into the sea in spite of his desire to keep it.

Starting from this principle, that there is no liberty of specification with regard to goods which appear to be invincibly and necessarily connected with happiness, the majority of Thomists [32] hold as probable that a pure spirit, an angel, cannot sin directly against the natural law of his being which he intuitively sees inscribed in his own essence. From every point of view duty must appear to him to be in conformity with his purely spiritual nature; here the occasions of practical error vanish, since there are no passions or sensitive appetite in the angel. The possibility of sinning presents itself only when the angel is raised to the supernatural order and must act according to the light of faith. The precepts of the supernatural order, the acts to be performed *by grace, through the beneficence of another,* may be displeasing to one who takes delight in the perfection of his own nature and in his own manner of acting (Ia, q. 63, a. 3). Thus Socrates and Plato were right in saying that the clearer one's intellect is, the more difficult it is to do what is wrong, to sin in any way, through ignorance. St. Thomas was able to retain a considerable part of Platonism in

[32] Billuart, *De angelis,* diss. V, a. 1. This opinion, common among the Thomists, is based upon two texts of St. Thomas: Ia, q. 63, a. 1 ad 3um; *De malo,* q. 16, a. 3.

his treatise on the angels. From this it does not follow that a pure spirit is not free; if an angel is not free in the natural order to do good or evil, in the moral order he is free with regard to the different means which have no necessary connection with the end in view. It is the same for the blessed who are supernaturally rooted in good, and for God who is absolutely impeccable by nature and is in possession of supreme liberty.

Such are the limits of a liberty derived from intelligence. There is no indifference in the presence of partial goods which evidently appear *hic et nunc* as an indispensable condition of happiness. But liberty of exercise, the only kind required for liberty, vanishes, according to St. Thomas, only when confronted by the divine essence intuitively known as the plenitude of all good (Ia, q. 82, a. 2). Not only can the absolute Good, viewed such as it is, not appear in any aspect as bad or insufficient, but in the act of love that it excites there is no trace of evil, reluctance, weariness, inconvenience, and to the eye of the intellect it is but one in a certain way with the possession of the absolute Good. There is, then, in this case no indifference of judgment concerning the exercise of the act. Consequently, there is no indifference in the will, strictly speaking, from the point of view of the exercise of the act which comes from the will. The absolute Good thus presented is adequate to the infinite capacity of the will in loving. By its very nature, the will tends toward this Good to the utmost of its inclination and power; there is no available energy left for the suspension of its act; there is nothing else but spontaneity of act, as the liberty of exercise disappears. This faculty of loving, the extent of which is unlimited, cannot but surrender itself to the attraction of the infinite Good which is intuitively known.

With regard to every other object, there is, from the point of view of exercise, indifference of judgment and consequently indifference of the will. The will is mistress of itself in yielding or not to the attraction of a good, the actual possession of which is

presented to it as advantageous, but only in certain respects. Man is free because the practical judgment that he forms about particular goods is of itself indifferent. "Particular works that can be done, are contingent and therefore in such matters the *judgment of reason may follow opposite courses, and is not determinate to one.* And forasmuch is it necessary that man has a free will, as he is rational" (Ia, q. 83, a. 1; q. 59, a. 3; II *Contra Gentes,* 48). Having started from this principle, that the appetite of a being endowed with knowledge is dependent on this knowledge, St. Thomas had to conclude that the free or independent appetite depends upon the indifference of the judgment. But is this indeterminate judgment which can be formulated either in the affirmative or the negative, sufficient on the part of the intellect so that the will may proceed to the act of election? Those who uphold the liberty of indifference in the sense of *liberty of equilibrium,* think so. The Molinists, and after them the Cartesians and Reid, maintain that the will can choose without having a motive for doing so, or when there are equal grounds for and against the choice. Suarez stated very clearly that it is not necessary for the intellect to have judged that the choice about to be made is the best *hic et nunc.*[33] Liberty is defined by these theologians as the faculty which, for action, can either act or not act. This means to say that, even after the final judgment which terminates deliberation, it is possible for the will (*in sensu composito*) not to perform the act in question. The disciples of St. Thomas, [34] appealing to the most

[33] "If the intellect judges that this particular means is useful or eligible, even though at the same time it judges something else to be useful, the will can choose one of the two; neither is it necessary previous to this that the intellect definitely decide that the other is to be chosen, nor even rather to be preferred." Suarez, *Disp. Met.,* XIX, sec. 6, n. 11.

[34] "It is not enough for the intellect to judge that each extreme is open to one's choice, but it must *definitely* decide that it is absolutely proper *hic et nunc,* all things considered, for what is chosen, to be chosen rather than its opposite: just as the will by a reflex act absolutely wills all this." Salmanticenses, *Cursus theol.,* 1878, V, 125; Billuart, *De actibus humanis,* diss. III, a. 6, sec. 4.

formal texts of their master,[35] teach, on the other hand, that there must always be a motive for the choice (*"nothing is willed unless foreknown"*), that there must be a determinate and positively final practico-practical judgment which is infallibly followed by the free act.[36]

Let us illustrate this by an example. According to St. Thomas, the one who sins judges speculatively that virtue is a good which in itself is of obligation; it is this speculative judgment which constitutes the element of advertence in sin. The sinner judges even practically that *hic et nunc* virtue may be considered from two points of view: under one aspect it is good, under the other it admits of a distinction, being *partly good* and *partly not good*. But precisely at the moment of sinning, the sinner judges practically that it is fitting to sin, saying to himself: this act is *simply* good

[35] "When the appetite appears not to follow upon knowledge, this is because the appetite and the judgment of reasoning are not concerned about the same thing; for the appetite is concerned about particular operable things, but the judgment of reason, at times, is concerned with something universal which is sometimes contrary to the appetite. *But a judgment concerning this particular thing that may be done at the present moment, never can be contrary to the appetite;* for he who wishes to fornicate, although he knows in a general way that fornication is wrong, yet, at that moment, he judges that fornication is a good act, and under the aspect of good chooses it." *De veritate*, q. 24, a. 3. And if we have presented to us *two means equally good*, "nothing hinders us from considering in one of them some particular point of superiority, so that the will has a bent toward that one rather than toward the other." Ia IIae, q. 13, a. 6 ad 3um. In this case, if we wish to choose, nothing prevents our considering in one of the two objects a certain condition which gives it the preference over the other. To realize this condition in favor of one of the two objects, the Thomists find judgment to be sufficient: liberty stands for reason. Cf. Billuart, *loc. cit.*

[36] The Thomists accept the Molinist definition of liberty, but with the following distinction: "a faculty, granted all that is required by a priority of *time* for acting, can act or not *in sensu composito;* a faculty, granted all that is required by a priority of *nature* for acting, can act or not, only *in sensu diviso.*" In the case of choice, both the divine premotion and the final judgment are prerequired by a priority of nature. Cf. Billuart, *De actibus humanis*, art. 1, sec. 4.

On this question of free will, see especially the Thomist John of St. Thomas, in his *Cursus phil., de anima*, q. 12, a. 1–4. If we quote Billuart more frequently, this is because he generally sums up the doctrine very clearly, and because he is better known.

hic et nunc. This is the way St. Thomas understood the words of St. Paul: *"I see and approve of the better things, but I do what is worse." "I see and approve of the better things"* (with a speculative and even a practical judgment which as yet is undetermined); *"I do what is worse"* (with a practico-practical judgment and by choice). It remains for us to examine how the intellect from an indifferent judgment arrives at a determinate final judgment.

To say that the intellect is indifferent, is to say that it is not here, as it were, confronted by a first principle or a necessary conclusion from which it cannot withhold its consent. Here, as in faith, the object does not sufficiently determine it; and in this case there could be no intellectual determination, if the will did not intervene to make up for the insufficiency in the order of specification. St. Thomas employs exactly the same terms when it is a question of explaining the rôle of the will in faith and in the final practical judgment. Concerning faith he writes: "The intellect of the believer is determined to one object, not by the reason but by the will; wherefore assent is taken here for an act of the intellect as determined to one object by the will" (IIa IIae, q. 2, a. 1 ad 3). "The act of faith is an act of the intellect determinate to one object by the command of the will" (IIa IIae, q. 4, a. 1). In the question which treats especially of the command of the will (Ia IIae, q. 17, a. 6), he explains in what case "assent or dissent is in our power and is subject to our command." This is so not only with faith, but in all cases in which the object does not sufficiently determine the intellect. If it is a question of adhering to a first principle, or a demonstrated conclusion, the will intervenes only in the order of exercise that it may apply the intellect to consider and judge; but if it is a question of formulating a definite judgment when the motive is objectively insufficient, the will must also intervene in order to make up for this objective insufficiency. "But some things are apprehended which do not convince the intellect so that one cannot assent or dissent, or at least suspend one's assent

or dissent, on account of some cause or other: and in such things assent or dissent *is in our power,* and is subject to our command" (Ia IIae, q. 17, a. 6). That is what St. Thomas understands by *being master of one's judgment.* He affirms in many places that *man is free, master of his choice, because he is master of his practico-practical judgment.* "If the judgment of the cognitive faculty is not in one's power, but is determined by another, neither the appetite will be in one's power, and consequently neither motion nor operation in the strict sense" (*De veritate,* q. 24, a. 2). "Man is the cause not only of his own motion, but also of his judgment; and therefore he has free will; it is as if one said that in point of judgment he is free to act or not to act" (*De veritate,* q. 24, a. 1). Concerning the liberty of the angels, we read (Ia, q. 59, a. 3): "There are some things which act, not from any previous judgment but, as it were, moved and made to act by others, just as the arrow is directed to the target by the archer. Others act from some kind of *judgment, but not from free will,* such as irrational animals; for the sheep flees from the wolf by the instinctive judgment whereby it esteems the latter to be hurtful to itself; such a judgment is not a free one, but implanted by nature. *Only an agent endowed with an intellect can act with* ■ *judgment which is free,* in so far as it apprehends the common note of goodness, from which it can judge this or the other thing to be good. Consequently, wherever there is intellect, there is free will." Therefore the will determines the practical judgment which without it would remain indifferent.[87]

Besides, if the will intervenes here only as regards the exercise of the act, evidently we would not escape determinism of the

[87] "Concerning particular things capable of being done, the judgment of reason may follow opposite courses, and is not determined to one" (Ia, q. 83, a. 1). "Since the intelligible form has a relation to opposite things, inasmuch as the same knowledge relates to opposites, it would not produce a determinate effect unless it were determined to one thing by the appetite, as the Philosopher says in the ninth book of his *Metaphysics,* text 10" (Ia, q. 14, a. 3).

circumstances. The circumstances being the same, man could not one time judge that it is suitable to act and another time that it is not (indifference of exercise). If in such circumstances the action was judged preferable, it will be of no use for the will to apply the intellect to consider the advantages of not acting; the intellect could never judge, the circumstances being the same, that it is better not to act. If the will intervenes only as regards the exerecise of the act in the positively final judgment, the spontaneity of the Jansenists is safeguarded, but not liberty of exercise.

St. Thomas, too, following Aristotle, always affirms (Ia IIae, q. 58, a. 5) that the truth of the practico-practical judgment contrary to truth of the speculative and the speculativo-practical judgments depends "not on its conformity with the thing but with right appetite." The appetite is rectified by virtue, and the intervention of the will in the order of specification is then explained by its tendency, by reason of which the object enters into a relation of either fittingness or unfittingness with the subject. But to explain this intervention of the will by appealing to its tendency, is merely to leave the question still unanswered. Tendency does not infallibly determine our free act, any more than the external circumstances do. Moreover, we cannot appeal to it to explain the first free act of the psychological life, as discussed by theologians with regard to the sin of the angels. How, then, are we to explain this intervention of the will? The answer to this question will be given in the following division (n. 61): How to reconcile free choice with the principle of sufficient reason. This will lead us to state more precisely the nature of this intervention on the part of the will, and we shall see that it is nothing else but choice itself which must follow judgment as regards formal causality and which precedes it as regards efficient causality. This relation of mutual priority will present itself to us as one of the most interesting applications of the Aristotelian axiom, in which we have briefly summarized the whole theory about the four causes, namely,

causae ad invicem sunt causae. For the present let it suffice to say that St. Thomas gives no other explanation of the voluntary inadvertence to the sense of obligation accompanying the sin of the angels. The angel willed not to consider; what is the cause of this? "But in an action of this kind, which consists in not following the rule of reason and the divine law, there is no need to seek for any cause because the liberty itself of the will is sufficient for this, by means of which it can act or not act" (*De malo*, q. 1, a. 3). *"He would not understand that he might do well"* (Ps. 35 : 4).

This intervention on the part of the will, necessary for overcoming the indifference of the practical judgment, could not be itself infallibly determined by the intellect since it comes into action precisely for the purpose of determining the intellect. It remains for us to prove against Leibniz—and we are not unmindful of the fact—that the influence of the circumstances and the interior dispositions are not sufficient for determining judgment when it is a question of acting or not acting. We have deemed it sufficient here to examine the thesis of St. Thomas without concerning ourselves with the Intellectualist objection. We shall see that the answer to this objection is deduced from the very principle of our theory, namely, that there is an infinite distance between universal and particular good, between total and partial good; and we will conclude that the intelligent being is free because it is master of its final judgment, because, at the very moment when it judges, by a reflex act it judges that it could judge otherwise or at least not judge (*a judgment on judgment*).[38]

This is how the most faithful disciples of St. Thomas have understood the doctrine of their master. Cajetan has explained with the greatest care that the truth of the practico-practical judgment

[38] "Judgment is in the power of the one judging in that one can pass judgment on one's judgment: for we can judge of that which is in our power. But to pass judgment on one's judgment belongs only to reason which reflects on its act and knows the ways in which those things that it judges are related. Hence all liberty has its root in reason" (*De veritate*, q. 24, a. 2).

depends "on its conformity with right appetite, not on its conformity with the object"; on this point he shows how the appetite may intervene as regards the specification of the object.[39] Elsewhere he expressly teaches that it is the will that determines the intellect "to judge that one of two opposites is to be done. . . . *It is the will alone which, as it wishes, inclines the judgment.*"[40] The Salmanticenses speak in the same way: "The will freely applies the intellect to *judge thus;* and because the total efficacy of that judgment is the result of this free application, liberty leaves it intact."[41] This doctrine reappears in Billuart's works.[42]

John of St. Thomas formulates as accurately as possible the Thomist thesis when he writes: "Indifference of liberty consists in the dominating power which the will has not only over its act originating from it, but also over the judgment by which it is moved to act. And this is necessary so that the will may have complete dominion over its actions" (*De anima,* XII, 2).[43]

[39] "In accordance with the self-assertiveness of the appetite, there arises in the intellect the conviction of its reasonableness; (because from the disposition of the appetite) in its very self-assertiveness there arises with regard to such appetite a relation of fittingness" (On Ia IIae, q. 58, a. 5).

[40] "Speaking unconditionally of the determination of the intellect, it must simply be said that the will determines the intellect to judge that one of two opposites is to be done; but the judgment differs according as things are good or evil. Because, when neither of two opposites denotes something morally evil, *it is the will alone which, as it wishes, inclines the judgment;* but, when one of the opposites is morally evil, the will itself inclines the judgment, yet not unless some other defect of the intellect is found to accompany this inclination, at least that of not considering all things that ought to be considered; and this sufficiently explains why *every evil act is done through ignorance,* as was said concerning the sin of the angels" (On Ia IIae, q. 77, a. 2, n. 4).

[41] Salmant., *op. cit.,* V, 426. "You may ask what act of the will causes such an application. We answer that it can be caused by the same act which that judgment directs on account of the mutual causality of different orders usually to be found in that application." *Ibid.*

[42] Billuart, *De actibus humanis,* diss. III, a. 6, sec. 4, *solv. obj.*

[43] A Thomist may thus interpret in a favorable sense these words of Lequier: "Liberty is applied to the final judgment which suggests the free act, and not only to the act strictly speaking of the will." "We can," so also Renouvier says, "stop, suspend, or banish a representation." The suggestion in a sense is an "auto-

Through want of sufficient consideration of this indifference of judgment which is the principle of the indifference of volition, objections have been raised against the Thomist doctrine, such as the following one: "There is nothing more open to question than the alleged postulate that inadequate objects, which do not exhaust the capacity of a psychological faculty, leave it in a state of indifference. I contemplate a masterpiece of art, for instance, the *Moses* of Michelangelo; it is a real but limited beauty which does not exhaust the ideal of the beautful nor the capacity of my aesthetic faculties. In all the fine arts there are some works worthy of admiration, such as a Gothic cathedral, the picture of the *Transfiguration, the Aeneid.* . . . The statue of Moses does not realize in itself all the forms of beauty; it is but a partial expression of beauty, and yet I admire it of necessity; it is not in my power to refuse this admiration. Here we have a contradiction of the general principle." [44] The objector may just as well say of a certain rigorous conclusion in geometry that it does not realize all forms of truth, that it is but a partial expression of the same; and yet I must accept it. St. Thomas has already answered this objection as follows: "The intellect is moved of necessity by an object which is such as to be always and necessarily true: but not by that which may be either true or false, viz., by that which is contingent, as we have said of the good" (Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 2 ad 2um). It is a general principle that a simple probable reason is not sufficient for determining the intellect; an object the beauty of which is open to question, does not necessarily call forth our admiration; also an object whose beauty, taking it *hic et nunc* and considering the

suggestion" of which our will is in a way the cause. Ravaisson saw in this doctrine what has been said to be more profound concerning the free will.

In Christ, who was *comprehensor* and *viator*, this intervention of the will was always what it ought to have been, because His will was *essentially upright*. It was that of the Word made flesh, and the beatific vision directed it. He merited, however, because His practico-practical judgment remained indifferent *as regards the merits of the object*. Cf. IIIa, q. 18, a. 4 ad 3um. Also Billuart, III, 57.

[44] Alibert, *La psychologie thomiste et les théories modernes*, p. 320.

dispositions of the will, is open to question, does not invincibly attract this will.

But the objection claims to be based on facts. "Is it true that partial goods leave our will in a state of indifference and do not determine that its act is one of necessity? To claim this would be to fail to recognize the existence of sensation. . . . Some partial goods of the suprasensible order arouse in us emotional feelings, indeliberate acts which precede the free determination, which begin as attractions and are transformed into desires, such as the attractions to perform an act of virtue, to visit a friend, to read something philosophical." [45] In addition to this it is said that, according to the Thomist division of the faculties, the only possible subject of these sensations is the will.

Every Thomist will answer that these are indeliberate and not free acts of the will, which are produced precisely when there is not sufficient reflection to assure indifference of judgment by a consideration of the two possible alternatives. "Hence we see that when there is no indifference in the judgment and it is solely restricted to one thing, the movement resulting in the will is indeliberate and not free." John of St. Thomas, *De anima,* q. 12, a. 2. The indeliberate movements have never been overlooked by theologians; they occupy a rather important place in every theory on actual grace, both sufficient and efficacious.

Nominalists, since they cannot distinguish between sensible and intellectual knowledge of good, have sought to ridicule the metaphysical proof of human liberty by saying that, if this proof were of any value, we should have to conclude that a hungry dog, from the very fact that his hunger is insatiable, is free to eat or not to eat a morsel of bread which he may find is not enough. Nominalism, if it is of the radical kind, leads in fact to Sensualistic Empiricism and is unable to discern what is the foundation of liberty.

In the doctrine of St. Thomas, the basis or the radical principle

[45] *Ibid.*

of liberty is in the intellect which knows what good is; its judgment therefore remains indifferent as regards any object and any act which is not free from every admixture of evil or imperfection. The proximate principle of liberty is in the vast scope of the will by which man as master determines his own judgment. A partial good can never be an invincible attraction for us so long as it does not appear to the intellect as a means absolutely necessary in view of an end which is absolutely imposed upon us.

In the final analysis, man is free only because he rises to the knowledge of the universal founded on the abstract; or better still (abstraction being a property of the human idea in so far as it is an idea), every intelligent being is free because it rises to the perception of the *raison d'être* and particularly of the *raison d'être* of good: because it knows what makes good to be such, the *quod quid est* or *ratio boni:* because it perceives this *ratio boni* which it finds again variously expressed in the delectable, the useful, and the upright. This *ratio boni* is the norm of its judgment when it is a question of affirming whether *hic et nunc* a certain thing is good; hence it is only in the presence of goodness that there must be an absence of all indifference, "a goodness not waxing and waning," as Diotima would have said in reply to Socrates, "not good in one point of view and bad in another, good in one place, bad in another, good for some, bad for others, . . . a goodness which is not to be found in any other being, as for example, in an animal or in earth or in heaven or in any other place, but which exists eternally and absolutely by itself and in itself; a goodness which is imparted to that of all other things, the appearance or disappearance of which does not bring about in it the least decrease or increase or change whatsoever." [46]

This derivation of liberty is based, as we see, upon the very principle of the philosophy of being, which is opposed to the philosophy of the phenomenon. It ceases to have any meaning for the Em-

[46] See Plato, *Symposium*, 211 c.

piric Nominalist who refers the abstract and universal concept to a common image which remains, for the purpose of consideration, concrete and singular. According to the Empiric, man has a common image of good, just as the grazing animal has an image of grass. This common image is but a *medium* between particular goods made known to us by experience; it is not of a higher order than these goods and does not at all represent this *ratio boni* which can be realized in all its purity only in the perfect and unlimited Good. Such a completely empiric representation cannot be the basis of liberty; it does not presuppose in the appetite which it specifies an unlimited range, and the practical syllogism in which it appears as a mean term is for the Empiric merely a tautology, since the universal is an illusion. With us as with the animal there is only a transition from the particular to the particular, subject to the laws of association. Empiricism, in point of liberty, must rest satisfied with the *clinamen* of Epicurus, that is to say with chance, or with simple spontaneity as Hume conceived it, or as Bergson views it at the present day.

It remains for us to see whether this theory of liberty which we have just explained, enables us to solve the fundamental objection of Determinism, that derived from the principle of sufficient reason, without at the same time abandoning the Intellectualist axiom that *"nothing is willed unless foreknown as suitable,"* as the defenders of the liberty of equilibrium do.

61) *Liberty and the principle of sufficient reason* (the sufficient motive).

"Not every cause produces its effect, although the cause be sufficient: for the cause can sometimes be prevented from attaining its effect." St. Thomas, *De malo,* q. 6, a. 1 ad 15.

We have deduced liberty of intellect. We have stated that the intelligent being is free because it possessses not only the *intermediate image* of sensible good, but also the *idea* of good; be-

cause it does not rest satisfied, like the animal, in perceiving things that are good, but because it knows of each of them that it is good, and why. Our intellect knows the reason for the good, that which makes good to be so; from that it rises to the idea of the perfect Good. Then, as we have shown, its practico-practical judgment remains *indifferent* (at least with an indifference of exercise) as regards every object and every act which is not without some element of evil, pain, or imperfection. An intervention of the will is necessary for overcoming this indifference of judgment, and this intervention could not be itself infallibly determined by the intellect, since the only purpose of the intervention is precisely to determine the intellect. That is why a man, placed twice in the same circumstances, can one time act and the other time not act. Liberty is deduced from the relation which our will bears to the universal, *i. e.,* to reason.

Does the theory of liberty enable us to solve the fundamental objection of Determinism, that derived from the principle of sufficient reason? The principle of Determinism which is also, in the physical order, the principle of induction, is stated as follows: The same cause in the same circumstances necessarily produces the same effect. This principle is one which is derived from the principle of sufficient reason that the change of effect would be absolutely without a sufficient reason if it were produced without there having been previously introduced into the cause or into the circumstances a change to determine it. Let the cause be A, and its effect B; if once from A could result, not effect B, but effect B′, this change from B to B′ would be without a cause and without a reason. The principle of Determinism seems, then, like the principle of sufficient reason from which it is derived, to be certain a priori, *i. e.,* the same cause in the same circumstances necessarily produces the same effect. But liberty, such as we have defined it, is a violation of this principle. Therefore liberty, such as we have defined it, is impossible.

We may answer this objection by a distinction as to the meaning of the word "cause." The same cause which by nature is determined *to one thing,* produces necessarily in the same circumstances the same effect, as for example, heat, electricity, magnetism. But the case is not the same with the will, which by nature is determined only to universal and not to some particular good. We are not called upon here to refute physiological Determinism: its refutation is included in that of Empiricism. St. Thomas merely says that physical or physiological influences cannot directly determine the act of the will; like our passions and our habits, they are previously submitted to the judgment of reason, which remains indifferent because its norm is universal good.[47]

But then the objection narrows down to this: even if the will is not by nature determined to a certain particular good, the difficulty remains. The will in all its acts must follow the judgment of the intellect. But the will would be judging without sufficient reason, if, without any change of circumstances, it were to change its judgment. Hence, with the circumstances unaltered, the will cannot change its choice.

The usual answer to this objection is that the will in all its acts must follow the judgment as to the specification of the object; but it precedes judgment as to the exercise of the act. Conse-

[47] "On the part of the body and its powers man may be such by virtue of a natural quality, inasmuch as he is of such a temperament or disposition due to any affection whatever produced by corporeal causes, which cannot affect the intellectual part, since it is not the act of a corporeal organ. And such as man is by virtue of a corporeal quality, such also does his end seem to him, because from such a disposition a man is inclined to choose or reject something. But *these inclinations are subject to the judgment of reason,* which the lower appetite obeys, as we have said (q. 81, a. 3). Wherefore this is in no way prejudicial to free will.

"The adventitious qualities are habits and passions by virtue of which a man is inclined to one thing rather than to another. And yet, *even these inclinations are subject to the judgment of reason.* Such qualities, too, are subject to reason, as it is in our power either to acquire them, whether by causing them or disposing ourselves to them, or to reject them. And so there is nothing in this that is repugnant to free will" (Ia, q. 83, a. 1 ad 5um).

quently, in judging or not judging, the intellect is dependent on the will, and this suffices for liberty of exercise.

This answer is not final. The objection again presses the point more closely. Even if the will precedes the intellect as to the exercise of the act, liberty of exercise is not safeguarded, but merely the spontaneity of the Jansenists. It is indeed an evident fact that, if the mere exercise of the act takes place, it depends upon the will; but it does not depend upon the will whether there is or not an act which is exercised; that is precisely the object of our deliberation. That must depend upon the intellect, and the intellect can in no case withdraw itself from the demands of the principle of sufficient reason.

This principle seems, indeed, to be derived from the principle of identity, which itself is based immediately on the notion of being. It states that "everything which exists has its sufficient reason," or "everything is intelligible." It is connected with the principle of identity by means of the principle of contradiction. (Cf. *supra,* n. 24.) From it are derived the principles of efficient and final causality. (Cf. nn. 25, 26, 27.)

If such is the connection between the principle of sufficient reason and being, which is the formal object of our intellect, must we not affirm a priori that this principle, as well as that of identity, governs all the modes of being and that nothing escapes it; so that *an absolute beginning* without a sufficient reason is repugnant, and that liberty such as we have defined it is manifestly impossible?

Such is, we think, the full force of the objection. Nothing is intelligible except as a function of being, of the principles of identity and of sufficient reason. But the free act as we understand it, implying as it does the initiative of voluntary intervention, would be an act without a reason and therefore in itself unintelligible and absurd. If we admit the primacy of the intellect, we must forever give up the idea of again finding liberty. If, then, we wish

to render morality possible, we must reject the absolute necessity of first principles as laws of the real, in all things subordinate the intellect to volition, in God at least, and say with Descartes that the truth of the principle of contradiction depends upon the caprice of the absolute Will. "If we do not put liberty in the first place, it has no place whatever; if it is not everything, it is nothing." Secrétan conferred on choice, either the formula of Parmenides which is the principle of identity, or the philosophy of liberty.[48]

Does our explanation of the theory of liberty enable us to answer this objection? On first consideration it seems not. We have seen that Thomist liberty steers a middle course between liberty of indifference in the sense of liberty of equilibrium—as conceived by the Molinists,[49] a few Cartesians and Reid who follow Scotus and certain Nominalists—and Psychological Determinism as conceived by Leibniz. Is this middle course possible? Is it possible to affirm against Scotus the prinicple of Intellectualism which is the subordination of the will to the intellect, without going so far as to admit Leibnizian Determinism? If the will by its definition is subordinate, must we not say that all its acts are determined by the intellect? The possibility of an intermediate position is denied by the advocates of both extreme views in virtue of the same principle, that Determinism is the inevitable consequence of Intellectualism.

Fundamentally, a Leibnizian will say, you do not differ from those who advocate liberty of equilibrium. It is this very liberty of equilibrium which you place before the final judgment instead

[48] *La philosophie de la liberté*, 2d ed., p. 439.

[49] Concerning the stand taken by these theologians, cf. Salmanticenses, *op. cit.*, V, 424. They refuse to admit that choice infallibly follows the final practical judgment. After the formulation of this final judgment, the will can (even *in sensu composito*) act otherwise. If it were not so, say these Scholastics, there would be no more liberty. If the will is guided in all things by the intellect, liberty is destroyed.

of placing it after the judgment. The will to appeal to, to entertain, or to set aside a certain motive, to consider what is one's duty under this or that aspect, cannot be itself without a motive. The middle course which you seek is illusive. An Intellectualist philosopher cannot admit a dominating indifference of the will which implies in the last analysis a free play of this faculty under the influence of the intellect. It is useless for us to limit these initiatives of the will; is it not an admission of these absolute beginnings, of these "victorious advances of the will" which Libertarians speak of?

The Molinists and Suarez likewise declare that there is no middle course between their view and the negation of liberty. Your solution, said Suarez to the Thomists, only defers the question at issue: that the act of the will preceding the final judgment must itself be preceded by another judgment in virtue of your alleged principle (that nothing is willed unless foreknown as suitable), and so on indefinitely.[50] Hence we have Determinism, for if the will in all things is guided by the intellect, liberty is destroyed.

St. Thomas (*De malo*, q. 6, a. 1, obj. 15) [51] brings out the full force of this objection. In replying to it, he merely recalls the prin-

[50] Cf. Suarez, *Disp. Met.*, disp. XIX, sec. 6.

[51] "If the will is not of necessity moved to will some things that it wills, we must say that it is free to choose; because what need not necessarily exist, can possibly not exist. But everything which is in potentiality and free to choose, is not reduced to act as regards the object of its choice except by some being that is in act, and this causes what was potential to become actual. But what makes anything become actual, we call its cause. Therefore, if the will determinately wills something, there must be some cause which makes it will this thing. But when the cause is placed, the effect must follow, as Avicenna proves (Bk. VI, *Met.*, chs. 1, 2), because if, the cause being placed, it is still possible for the effect not to follow, then there will still be need of another cause reducing this one from potentiality to act; and thus the first was not a *sufficient cause*. Therefore the will is of necessity moved to will something." *De malo*, q. 6, a. 1, obj. 15. This same objection is more briefly expressed in Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 2: "The object of the will is compared to the will as mover to movable, as stated in *De anima*, iii (tex. 54). But a mover, if it be sufficient, moves the movable of necessity. Therefore the will can be moved of necessity by its object."

ciples of his thesis; indeed we shall see that in them we have a solution of the problem that Intellectualism prepares the way for true liberty.

First of all we will show that Thomist liberty is not at all liberty of equilibrium which immediately precedes practical judgment. True to the principle of Intellectualism, this theory admits of no act of the will which is not formally determined by the intellect.

A. Thomist liberty is not liberty of equilibrium; all its acts are formally determined by the intellect. In replying to Suarez, the Thomists say that the act of the will, by which the intellect is applied to judge in a certain way, is that very act which follows judgment.[52] There is no contradiction if we properly understand Aristotle's axiom concerning the ways in which the different kinds of causes are interrelated. Causes mutually interact, though in a different order, καὶ ἀλλήλων αἰτία.[53] Here we willingly acknowledge that there is an element of truth in the analyses of

[52] "The infallible connection between the act of the will and the final practical judgment of the intellect does not interfere with its liberty; because, although it is not in the power of the will consequent to the act to refuse to assent to such a judgment, yet previous to the act it truly has this power by which it *freely applied* the intellect *to form such a judgment. And because the total efficacy of the judgment comes from this free application, liberty remains intact.* You may ask what act of the will causes such an application. We answer that it can be caused by the *same act* which that judgment directs on account of the mutual causality of different orders usually to be found in that application: for judgment in the order of extrinsic formal causality directs the will to determine its choice thus; and the will in the order of efficient causality applies the intellect as to the exercise of the act so as to come thus to a decisive judgment. But this result can be verified only when both in the intellect and in the will certain acts have preceded, from which the above-mentioned causality can be deduced." Salmant., V, 426. This concluding sentence refers to the very first act of the psychological life. The intellect cannot be applied to its very first judgment by the will which is as yet in a state of pure potentiality; there is need here of a special intervention on the part of God, who is the prime mover of intellects. We say that for this act God Himself gives the *dictamen* (Ia, q. 82, a. 4 ad 3um). In this first instant the creature cannot sin; it is not in complete possession of liberty (*non est plenum dominium*). The liberty of this first act seems very much like Leibnizian liberty.

[53] *Met.*, IV, ch. ii, 515, 24 (Didot).

Bergson and Le Roy when they affirm that everything is in everything. For us, too, in a sense, everything is in everything, but without confusion, and the real does not escape the intellect. It is solely due to these conceptual and real distinctions that this becomes possible of comprehension. These distinctions have been distorted by the "new philosophies" which always seek to view them, very incorrectly so, as quantitative and spatial distinctions. The Bergsonians are fond of speaking of those "reciprocal conditionings, those mutually prior relations, those discursively unsolvable riddles which characterize the march of life at every stage."[54] There is nothing truer than the existence of these mutually prior relations; but must we regard them as so many unsolvable riddles for discursive reasoning, declare the real to be unintelligible, and take refuge in a philosophy of action? Aristotle and the defenders of the philosophy of the concept do not think so. Having rendered becoming intelligible as a function of being by means of the distinction of the four causes, Aristotle recognizes and explains how these causes are mutually related. Becoming presupposes an undetermined being (potency or matter) which acquires a determination (act or form). This progressive determination of potency presupposes a determining principle (efficient cause), and this active potency of the agent gives this determination rather than another only because it is ordained to such an act and not to a certain other. With Aristotle, that potency refers to act, is one of the simplest formulas of the principle of finality. From this it follows that causes mutually interact from different points of view, καὶ ἀλλήλων αἰτία. Matter receives and limits the form, the form determines and contains the matter. The efficient cause brings about that which makes it a finality. The desire of some good arouses the agent to action, and the action causes it to acquire the desired good.[55]

[54] Le Roy, *Annales de philosophie chrétienne*, December, 1906.

[55] "The efficient cause is the cause of the end as regards its *existence*, indeed,

These mutually prior relations must reappear wherever the four causes intervene, which means that "they characterize the march of life at every stage." The living being takes its food, but the food reacts upon it and reinvigorates it. The cognitive being assimilates to itself its object and yet allows itself to be assimilated by it. The intellect would have no knowledge of first principles if the object of first ideas were not *materially* presented to it by the senses, and yet the intellect, in virtue of the purely intellectual evidence of first principles, can judge *formally* of the validity of sensation and of sensible evidence. There is in this no vicious circle but a mutual relation between different species of cause. In like manner we would not assent by an act of divine faith to the dogmas of revealed truth unless these were proposed to us by the Church. It is *an indispensable condition*. Yet by this same faith, in virtue of the authority of God revealing, which is the *formal motive* of faith, we can believe supernaturally in the infallibility of the Church. There is no vicious circle in this but a mutual relation between the formal motive and the indispensable condition. Thus, in the physical order, fire burns straw by reason of its combustible property, provided that the straw is near enough to it. But the progress itself of combustion causes the fire to draw nearer and nearer to it.

In the order of grace there are classical examples cited by theologians. In the justification of the sinner which takes place in one instant, the remission of sin is the result of the infusion of grace, although on the part of the sinner deliverance from sin precedes the reception of grace, according to priority of nature.[56]

because the action of the efficient cause is for this that it be the end; but the end is the cause of the efficient cause, not in the existential order but *in the order of causality*." St. Thomas, *In Met.*, V, lect. 2.

[56] "On the part of the thing moved, the withdrawal from a term naturally precedes the approach to a term, since in the subject of movement the opposite which is put away is prior to the opposite which the subject moved, attains to by its movement. But on the part of the agent it is the other way about, since the agent, by the form pre-existing in it, acts for the removal of the opposite form;

Light dispels darkness, but darkness is no longer present when light makes its appearance. "You would not be seeking me if you had not already found me."[57] Our Lord said of Magdalen: "Many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much. But to whom less is forgiven, he loveth less" (Luke 7:47). As justification is the work of God in us, we must first of all consider the divine efficient cause and say purely and simply that the remission of sin is the result of the infusion of grace. We obtain from God the remission of sin, and it is not because we are freed from sin that we receive the grace of God. Pelagianism was an utterly material concept of justification.

In the reverse order, the moment that man sins mortally and loses habitual grace, his falling away from grace, in the order of material causality, precedes God's refusal of efficacious actual grace and is the reason of this. In causality of another kind, however, this falling away presupposes the absence of efficient grace and would not happen without it.[58] Final perserverance is also a free gift granted to the predestined (Council of Trent, Sess. VI, ch. xiii). But, contrary to justification, sin as such is the work of the creature who becomes deficient and is not the work of God; it is therefore true to say that purely and simply sin precedes the refusal of God's efficacious grace. In other words, God does not abandon the just before He is abandoned by them. "God forsakes

as the sun by its light acts for the removal of darkness, and hence *on the part of the sun, illumination is prior to the removal of darkness; but on the part of the atmosphere to be illuminated, to be freed from darkness is,* in the order of nature, *prior to being illuminated, although both are simultaneous in time.* And since the infusion of grace and the remission of sin regard *God who justifies,* hence in the order of nature, *the infusion of grace is prior to the freeing from sin.* But if we look at what is *on the part of the man justified,* it is the other way about, since in the order of nature, *the being freed from sin is prior to the obtaining of justifying grace"* (Ia IIae, q. 113, a. 8 ad 1um).

[57] Pascal, *Mystère de Jésus.*

[58] "Help is refused only to the one who becomes deficient, not before the deficiency, and yet the defection follows from the refusal of help." John of St. Thomas, on Ia, q. 19, disp. 5, a. 6, sec. 61.

not those who have been once justified by His grace, unless He be first forsaken by them" (Council of Trent, Sess. VI, ch. xi). All receive sufficient grace and all have sufficient grounds for doing what is right, and this gives them the power to do what is right, but not to do so effectively.

The same law of mutual relations between various kinds of cause must regulate the relations between the intellect and the will at the completion of deliberation. The answer of the Thomists is not a crafty device; it is based upon the very definition of becoming. In the case of the final practical judgment and the act of the will which precedes and follows it, there is no priority of time.[59] At one and the same time the will applies the intellect to judge what it must choose, and is directed by the intellect in its choice. There is here only *priority of nature* and reciprocal priority according to the point of view that one takes of it. In the order of extrinsic formal causality (directive idea), there is priority of judgment, since the judgment actually directs the will that it may choose in a certain manner; but in the order of efficient causality there is priority of volition which applies the intellect to judge in such a way, priority of volition which can suspend the inquiry of the intellect or let it proceed.[60] *The will is thus the cause of the attraction itself that it experiences,* in this sense, that it depends upon the will to cause the intellect to judge that a certain good is by nature disposed to move it; *it is the cause of the direction that it receives,* in so far as it moves the intellect to impress upon it this direction.

Kant says that *empirical causality,* which is realized in *time,* implies Determinism; but where we find *intelligible* causality in operation, *there is neither before nor after;* this causality is liberty

[59] To will and not to will—the movements of free will—are not successive, but instantaneous. Hence the justification of the ungodly must not be successive." Ia IIae, q. 113, a. 7 ad 4um: *Whether the justification of the ungodly takes place in an instant or successively.* Cf. Ia, q. 95, a. 1 ad 5um.

[60] Salmant., *op. cit.*, V, 426.

itself.[61] The Thomists do not believe that they get out of the difficulty so easily as this, and they do not think that the whole problem is solved after eliminating priority of time.

It remains to be seen whether efficient causality, though bearing a *relation of dependence* to extrinsic formal causality (idea), would not retain an *absolute priority* over the other causes when it is under the necessity of acting. It cannot be doubted. The formal causality of the idea *actually* exerts its influence only in virtue of an application which depends upon efficient causality. If the artist wishes to act, he has need of a directive idea; but this idea exerts its formal causality only if the artist *by his action* makes use of it as the director *of his action*.[62] When it is question of an act to be performed, it is efficient causality that is positively the first, and it must take the initiative. It is, in truth, only by entering into a relation of dependence upon the idea that it comes into action; but to come into action or not to come into action, depends upon itself. The act of coming into action cannot be commanded by the formal determination to do so. *"Causes are to one another causes, though in a different order; but the efficient cause is absolutely prior to other causes in act."* When there is question of an act to be performed, it is the efficient cause that *purely and simply* has priority.

By this answer the Thomists distinctly separate from the advocates of the liberty of equilibrium. They affirm that there can be no efficient causality in action without a formal determination,

[61] *Critique of Pure Reason* (Transcendental Dialectic), ch. ii, sec. 9.

[62] "Any cause whatever is, of its kind, partly prior to another; but the causality of the efficient cause is *absolutely prior* to both the material and the formal causes *in their act of causation*. . . . Hence the aforesaid volition is absolutely prior; for, indeed, the extrinsic formal cause does not cause in the second act any operation unless it is applied to this by what makes use of it, producing as efficient cause the aforesaid operation; so it results, indeed, that the influence of the efficient cause upon the aforesaid operation is absolutely prior . . . because the extrinsic formal cause does not actually cause the operation of its kind unless it be applied to this by the efficient cause, as is evident in the case of the artificer and his idea." Salmant., IV, 680.

that there can be no act of the will which is not formally determined by the intellect. The will in all its acts is guided by the intellect. But it is for the will to enter into this relation of dependence as regards the motive of its action, and the same act of volition which follows judgment, in a sense precedes it.

This Thomist thesis is but an application of the general theory of the *subordination of the total causes of one effect.* One single effect can be entirely the result of the First Cause and entirely that of the subordinate secondary cause. Thus our choice, in so far as it is good, is entirely from God and entirely from ourselves; it is equally the result both of our intellect and of our will.

Suarez in this question as in many other questions, substitutes for *the subordinate total causes* of which St. Thomas speaks, *co-ordinate partial causes.* According to him, God is only the partial cause of our acts; similarly, in the act of deliberation, the intellect and the will would also be *co-ordinate partial causes,* like two separate persons towing a boat.

B. In the principles of Thomist Intellectualism we have a refutation of Psychological Determinism. We avoid liberty of equilibrium, but do we avoid Psychological Determinism? It seems not. Too many psychologists think they have refuted Leibniz by saying: "The intellect is by its nature representative, contemplative, and not an active and motive power. It illumines the will, pointing out the end; but it is the will that tends to the end by its own motive power." [63] Leibniz would reply: "Priority of efficient causality admitted and understood, according to the principle that *causes are to one another causes,* safeguards only spontaneity, the mere exercise of the act, but not liberty in your sense of the term. I agree that the will is the first principle as regards the exercise of the act, and it is clear that if it did not apply the intellect to the act of consideration there would never be any

[63] Rabier, *Psychologie,* 2d ed., p. 549.

volition. But you do not at all explain how, placed twice in the same circumstances, we could in one case judge that it is fitting to act and in the other that it is not. Priority of efficient causality does not imply this initiative which would be a violation of the principle of sufficient reason." Let us recall that if the principle of sufficient reason is inseparable from the principle of identity which governs all the modes of being, it must itself govern all the modes of being. A thing without a sufficient reason is a contradiction; a thing is what it is either by reason of itself or of something else. An absolute beginning is something repugnant.

In *De malo,* q. 6, a 1 ad 15, St. Thomas answers this objection as follows: The will always has a sufficient reason for acting, but it cannot have an infallibly determinative sufficient reason. "It must be said that not every cause necessarily produces an effect, even though it be a sufficient cause, for this reason, that the cause can be prevented sometimes from attaining its effect; such are natural causes which only in most cases necessarily produce their effects, because in a few cases they are prevented from so doing. Thus therefore, it need not necessarily be so that the cause makes the will wish something; for the will itself can put an obstacle in the way, either by discarding such consideration as induces it to will, or by considering the opposite: namely, that this which is proposed as good, in some aspect is not good." This answer would be meaningless unless it were interpreted in accordance with the fundamental principle of the Aristotelian and Thomist theory of liberty, namely: that there is essentially a lack of proportion between universal and particular good, between total and partial good, that there is an infinite distance between them. It has been said in the body of this article that liberty of exercise still holds good as regards happiness, "because anyone is able not to will then to think of happiness; because even the acts themselves of the intellect and of the will *are particular ones.*" Does

not Leibniz forget to take into consideration the fact that the indifference of our judgment has its final reason in the absolute universality of the will and in the infinite capacity we have for loving? The exterior circumstances and the interior dispositions are powerless to determine infallibly this final practical judgment, namely, that it is better to act than not to act. So long as *"to act,"* as well as *"not to act,"* has its advantages and disadvantages, we are concerned with two finite goods in which there is a mingling of non-good. But *two finite goods, however unequal, are both at an infinite distance from the pure Good, in whom there is no admixture of imperfection.*

If there are two unequal infinite distances, this will never be so except in so far as they are finite on one side, *in ratione finiti.* Hence *there cannot be an absolutely determining sufficient reason for the transition from the Infinite to a certain finite quantity or quality rather than to a certain other;* or, what comes to the same thing, there cannot be an infallibly determining sufficient reason for the transition from the one to the multiple, from the universal to the particular. In this case there is an insurmountable obstacle which no principle of the intelligible order can overcome, neither the principle of sufficient reason nor that of contradiction. We shall see this disproportion to be far more pronounced when we come to consider the divine liberty, the sovereign independence of God who, with regard to everything created, is both Being itself and Good itself, and who, as regards everything created, infinitely transcends all possible worlds. But the same problem presents itself in man: the problem of the relation existing between the one and the multiple, the pure and the mixed, the universal and the particular, the infinite and the finite.

Two partial goods, however *unequal* they may be, are both compounded of potentiality and act, and hence both are infinitely removed from the perfect Good who alone is pure Act. There can be a relatively sufficient, but not an absolutely sufficient and

actually determinative reason for preferring the one to the other. The reason is relatively sufficient as regards the inequality of the means; it is not absolutely so, that is to say, as regards the general end of all human activity, which is unlimited good or perfect happiness. Therefore, like sufficient grace, it gives the *power* to act, but not to act *effectively*.

In the *Summa* (Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 2), St. Thomas answers this objection as follows: "The sufficient mover of a power is none but that object that in every respect presents the aspect of the mover of that power, and as regards the will this is perfect good in which nothing is lacking. If, on the other hand, it is lacking in any respect, it will not move of necessity." We see that St. Thomas sometimes says that the motive is sufficient and sometimes that it is not so. It is really sufficient in its order; it gives the power to act, though not to act effectively.

To grasp the meaning of this reply and see how psychological liberty is established without compromising the necessity of the principles and conclusions of the moral law, we must distinguish clearly, as we have done, between the speculative-practical judgment (we must do what is right) which dictates what is good *in itself* at all times and in all places, independently of circumstances, and the practico-practical judgment which dictates what is good *for us hic et nunc* (it is good for me at this moment to perform this act of justice). The truth of the first judgment, says Aristotle, is an absolute truth, its truth depends upon its conformity with the thing; the second judgment is a relative truth dependent upon the actual rectitude of the appetite, *veritas ejus accipitur per conformitatem ad appetitum rectum.*[64] The specu-

[64] *Ethic.*, VI, ch. ii, St. Thomas, lect. 2. St. Thomas, Ia IIae, q. 57, a. 4, and 5 ad 3um; "The truth of the speculative intellect depends upon conformity between the intellect and the thing (and it cannot infallibly be in conformity with things, in contingent matters); but the truth of the practical intellect depends upon conformity with a right appetite (and this conformity, indeed, is found only in contingent matters which can be effected by us)."

lative-practical judgment is concerned with the order of specification, namely, that *in itself* the act of justice is a good in conformity with right reason, that the act of injustice can be only an apparent good. The practico-practical judgment, on the contrary, at least that one which is absolutely required for liberty,[65] is concerned with the order of exercise; and this, we say, is an indifferent judgment, in spite of the urgent appeal made by interior dispositions and actual exterior circumstances. Thus, *hic et nunc,* for me the act of justice is and also is not a good: I can place the act and also refrain from so doing; is this not because I consider that it is good to *try out my liberty,* by refusing to respond to the motives which attract me? [66] So long as *"not to act"* and *"to act"* each has its advantages and disadvantages, I am concerned with two finite goods compounded with non-good. However unequal the two parts may be, the practico-practical judgment which is concerned with the exercise of the act, inasmuch as it depends entirely on the intellect, remains in a sense indifferent. An intervention of the will is necessary to overcome this indifference. *The will intervenes in this case not only for the pure and simple exercise of the act* (it would only be spontaneity, freedom from coercion), *but for the fittingness of the exercise,* that there may or may not be an act performed. It is in this that the essence of liberty consists, and this alone is required for liberty.[67]

[65] Only liberty of exercise pertains to the essence of liberty. To be free with regard to an object, it is not necessary for us to be able to love or hate it, to prefer it to another, or another to it; it is sufficient if we are able to love or not to love it. To be master of our act, it is enough if we can act or not act.

[66] In this case the statement that *the will is on the side of reason,* becomes the motive, the object of a judgment. It is not, as the advocates of liberty of equilibrium maintain, merely an initiative of the will. Cf. Billuart, *De actibus humanis,* diss. III, a. 4, sec. 4.

[67] Let us call to mind the text of St. Thomas already quoted, in which he defines what it is to be master of one's judgment. It is not in our power to adhere or not to a first principle, a demonstrated conclusion; here the will merely intervenes for the pure and simple exercise of the act in order to apply the intel-

There is evidently a great difference between these two judgments. We can accept the speculative-practical judgment of one who teaches us the moral law or who gives us advice; but the practico-practical judgment is exclusively our own and absolutely incommunicable. To confound the second with the first is equivalent to saying with Plato, that virtue is a science (Ia IIae, q. 58, a. 5); it is also claiming for science moral dispositions (σὺν ὅλῃ τῇ ψυχῇ) which it does not necessarily call for (*ibid.*).

Let us take as example a man who is on the point of yielding to temptation. Placed twice in the same circumstances, he can one time judge that it is right to sin, another time that it is right to do his duty or at least not to act. The practico-practical judgment remains undetermined, even under the influence of the circumstances. By its speculative-practical judgment, the intellect affirms that virtuous good is superior in itself to delectable good; it can still see that, granted our habitually good dispositions, virtuous good is ever preferable not only *in itself*, but *for us*. But, if it is a question of deciding *hic et nunc* concerning the *exercise* of this particular act by which we are about to will effectively this virtuous good, then the intellect left to itself remains undetermined.

lect to consider and to judge. But, if it is a question of formulating a determinate judgment with an insufficient objective motive, the will must also intervene in a special manner in order to make up for this objective insufficiency. In this case we are *masters of our judgment*. "Some things are apprehended which do not convince the intellect so that one cannot assent or dissent, or at least suspend one's assent or dissent, on account of some cause or other; and in such things assent or dissent *is in our power*, and is subject to our command" (Ia IIae, q. 17, a. 6). In explaining the Thomist theory of liberty, we have quoted (n. 60) other not less convincing texts of St. Thomas and his commentators. Here the case is similar to that of faith. "The intellect of the believer is determined to one object, not by the reason, but by the will; wherefore assent is taken here for an act of the intellect as determined to one object by the will" (IIa IIae, q. 2, a. 1 ad 3um). "The act of faith is an act of the intellect determined to one object by the command of the will" (IIa IIae, q. 4, a. 1). There is only this difference, that in faith the movement of the will has as extrinsic cause the judgments of credibility and of credentity which precede it; here the movement of the will has no other motive than that to which it gives the prevalence in virtue of the principle, that causes are to one another causes in a different order.

Why? Because here it is no longer a question of considering this partial good, from the point of view of specification, as it is related to the principles of right reason, or as it is related to habits which are, so to speak, on the surface of our will. But, since it is a question of *exercise,* we must consider this partial good in its relation to the will itself and in what is basic to it, since the will has to concern itself entirely with the act to be performed. Now, this virtuous good, not being free from all admixture of evil or trouble, inadequately corresponds to the capacity of the will, and is *just as much inadequate* as delectable good would be; *the difference is all on the finite side.* The intellect cannot, therefore, have an absolutely determinate sufficient reason when it is a question of formulating a final practical judgment; for there is no absolutely determinate reason which allows of the transition from the Infinite to a certain finite quantity or quality rather than to a certain other.

Pascal would have it that *"it is a sufficient reason which is not sufficient,"* as in the case of grace. This expression, which he considered a criticism of the Thomists, affords, in its way, a ray of light. In all cases of *mutual* causes have we not the same fact of causes sufficient in their order, though not of themselves *effective?* Still more so is this the case when it concerns the transition from the Infinite to the finite. The question of the sufficiency of grace must be solved by the same principles as that of sufficiency of motive.[68] Sufficient grace can make us truly act, but from the deficiency of our nature an obstacle may be placed in the way, by reason of which God will deprive us of *efficient grace* which

[68] Cf. John of St. Thomas, on Ia, q. 19, disp. 5, a. 6, sec. 61, *"Solvuntur argumenta ex defectu auxilii."* Sufficient actual grace is a transitory grace, prevenient and impelling, which produces in us indeliberate movements of the will, pious emotions, good aspirations, which incline the will to choose. Thus it immediately disposes us to perform a deliberate, salutary act, without, however, making us perform this act effectively. *Like the motive, it gives only the power to act.* Cf. Billuart, *De gratia,* diss. V, art. 4. See *infra,* n. 65: Moral evil and the divine universal causality.

would have caused us to act *effectively*. Thus the flower suffices for producing the fruit; to produce it effectively, it is necessary that it be not destroyed by hail, and that it receive the light of the sun.

This answer to the Determinist objection is taken from the very principle of our theory, namely, that the will, being specified by universal good, cannot be invincibly attracted by any good which is mingled with non-good, so long as this is presented to it as such. It is, so to speak, of infinite profundity, an abyss which only the absolute Good can fill; it has a capacity for loving which only the attractions of God seen face to face can move to its very depths and invincibly hold captive. It can tend with all its ardor and all its being toward the object which obviously and practically presents itself as the plenitude of all being. Apart from the intuitive knowledge of the divine essence, there is no sufficient reason which infallibly determines the exercise of volition. Judgment which regulates this exercise remains indifferent in this sense, that the attraction of a finite good, whether virtuous, useful, or delectable, appeals to the will without being able to reach its depths. It belongs to the will *to meet this attraction half-way,* for the attraction itself is incapable of coming all the way to the will. *It is thus the will determines the judgment which must in turn determine the will: causes are to one another causes.* For the same reason it holds the intellect to the consideration pleasing to it, suspending the intellectual inquiry or allowing this to pursue its course. In the final analysis it depends upon the will that a certain judgment is the last. *The free act is a gratuitous answer, drawn from the infinite depths of the will, to the impotent solicitation of a finite good.*

Not enough attention is paid to the fact that the *certitude, derived from the sensus communis* which we have of our liberty and which is called the *consciousness of our free will,* is but the metaphysical proof of liberty in a confused state, just as the

nominal definition of free will contains its real definition in a confused manner. Previous to all philosophical research, natural reason, which has *universal being* as its primary, formal, and adequate object, and which therefore has knowledge of universal good, is assured by reflection of the existence of our free will. This reflection is intellectual consciousness. And in what *objective medium* does natural reason thus come to know of our liberty, unless it be in that of *universal good* and the *infinite disproportion between it and a particular good?* We have thus a confused but absolutely certain knowledge of the *infinite amplitude* of our will and of its *dominating indifference* with regard to every finite good.

This consideration made Descartes say: "The will is infinite. . . . It is only the will or only the liberty of free will that I experience to be so great that I do not conceive the idea of one ampler or more extensive, so that it is mainly by this that I know I am made to the image and likeness of God" (Fourth Meditation). From our point of view an Intellectualist may say in a sense with the Libertarian Lequier [69] that, "by liberty *not* (*only*) *becoming, but doing and in doing we realize ourselves.* . . . Who has not felt with a mingling of pleasure and astonishment that this power is exerted within him and upon him [70] . . . to establish his personality? Is there a man who has not been overwhelmed at catching a glimpse of the grandeur and majesty . . . of man when the true notion of liberty, which is the outburst of consciousness, suddenly made known to him the depths of his being? It is an illumination which reveals an abyss."

[69] Lequier, *Recherche d'une vérité première, frag.*, p. 85.

[70] On this point Lequier writes: "A *creative* power and one establishing his personality"; further on we read: "the majesty and the *divinity* of man." An exaggerated sense is evidently given to these metaphorical expressions in the Libertism of Lequier who went farther than the Pelagian error did in the glorification of man, who denied both foreknowledge and premotion, and who conceived our liberty to be rather primary than secondary.

Thus we recognize the element of truth hidden in the philosophy of liberty. We admit in a sense some initiatives of volition, and we affirm that if the human will is not creative, it is at least in the order of secondary causes the source of action. It is not only *moved* for the purpose of *becoming* what it was not, but does itself act and move and causes one to act. It brings into the world a series of facts which do not necessarily result from those previously posited. Such is the possible rôle for one who is not satisfied with knowing, but who at the same time knows how to will.

Here we come back to what constitutes the basis of our thesis, that the radical principle of *liberty* is the *intellect* in so far as it knows in what good truly consists; the proximate principle is the *infinite amplitude of the will* which is specified by universal good. The radical principle of *choice* or the *free act* is the indifference of judgment: the proximate principle is the *dominating indifference of the will* with regard to it as mingled with non-good.

But there is still another difficulty. If you admit, as we understand it, a sufficient and determinate reason which does not infallibly determine, are you not admitting a contradiction? Is not the principle of sufficient reason inseparably connected with the principle of identity and, like it, without exception or possible restriction?

Let us remark, first of all, that if our theory restricted the principle of sufficient reason, this restriction would not merely be imposed as the Libertarians say, because of the necessity of safeguarding the moral law, but also because of the disproportion between the finite and infinite, between the particular and the universal.

Besides, this restriction is only apparent. More than this, it is but a consequence of the apparent restriction which is placed

upon the principle of identity when, with Plato and Aristotle, it is affirmed that a certain *non-being* in a certain way *is*. This non-being is potency which is not actual being but undetermined being, an intermediary between actual being and pure nothingness. If we can speak of a *sufficient and determinate reason* which does not *infallibly determine,* this is because it was previously possible to affirm that *a certain being in a sense is not.* If there can be a *reason for acting,* which of itself does not actually and necessarily determine the action, this is because there can be, apart from nothingness, *undetermined being,* which of itself is not *actual* being. The nature of the action is according to the nature of the being. The principle of sufficient reason which is connected with the principle of identity is based, like this latter, on the notion of *being;* but this notion is *analogous* and not univocal; it applies both to undetermined and to determined being. There are, therefore, necessarily determinate sufficient reasons and others that are not so.

This reality of non-being or potency was perforce admitted as we have seen (n. 21), by Plato and Aristotle when they were under the necessity of rendering intelligible as a function of being the opposition between the one and the multiple, the pure and the mixed, the perfect and the imperfect, the universal and the particular, the infinite in perfection and the finite, *i.e.,* opposition of terms between which liberty finds its exact place and also *sufficient reason* which gives us the *power* of determining but not of *actually determining,* just as *sufficient grace,* according to the Thomists, gives us the *power* to act, but not *to act effectively.*

Plato, in the *Sophist,*[71] establishes the existence of non-being for the purpose of explaining the multiplicity of beings all of which are being and which, therefore, differ from one another

[71] Plato, *Sophist,* 241 D, 257 A, 259 E. Cf. Brochard, *De l'erreur,* 2d ed., pp. 15–27.

by something else than being. Multiplicity, which is an established fact, obliges him to "lay hands on the formula of Parmenides and affirm that non-being is," an intermediary between being and pure nothingness which is the limit of being. The opposition between pure being and that which is compounded of being and non-being also explains the opposition between the perfect and the imperfect, between the universal and the particular. Aristotle gives precision to this concept by his analysis of becoming; relative non-being becomes the potency which alone permits of rendering becoming intelligible as a function of being: being is not produced from being, because it is already being; out of nothing, nothing is made, and yet being is made. Whence does it come? From a certain medium between nothing and being, and we call this medium potency.[72] From now on matter is conceived as a potency which is both the subject of substantial becoming and the principle of individuation; a multiplicity of individuals of the same species cannot be explained except by admitting potency (matter) as the limit of the act which is common to them (the form). Later on we will say that the multiplicity of beings in general cannot be explained except by admitting potency (essence) as the limit of the act which is common to them (existence).

The concept of potency is a fundamental tenet of Aristotelianism. It constitutes the basis in the theory of the four causes, in the theory of the union of the soul with the body; it is the principle in the theory of the faculties,[73] in the theory of knowledge (intellectual potency is by nature intentional, essentially related to being), and in the theory of the will which is essentially related to universal good and superior to particular good.

Potential being, which is intermediate between actual being

[72] See I *Phys.*, ch. viii, commentary of St. Thomas, lect. 14.

[73] Far from being artificial and quite meaningless, as the Nominalists say, *the theory of faculties*, presupposed by our thesis, is the only one which renders psychological activity *intelligible as a function of being*.

and pure nothingness, is therefore of absolute necessity in order to render intelligible, as a function of being, both multiplicity and becoming, which seem at first sight to be a violation of the principle of identity. This multiple and changing world in a certain way *is not,* said Plato, and that is why it cannot exist of itself. The principle of identity and the principles derived from it oblige us to connect it with pure Being or with "the most dazzling part of being," pure Good without admixture of non-good. It is only in this "pure Good" that we find completely verified the formula of Parmenides that "Being is." God, revealing Himself to men, said: *"I am who am."*

Necessary for rendering intelligible both multiplicity and becoming, this intermediary between actual being and pure nothingness imposes a limit upon Intellectualism. Potency is not positively intelligible in itself but only in its relation to act: "Everything is knowable according as it is actual" (Ia, q 12, a. 1). Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle held that the individual is ineffable, that the only science is that of the universal; this is because the principle of individuation is matter, that is to say, the undetermined. Wherever there is potency, that is to say in everything created, which is a compound of being and non-being, of good and non-good, there is also indetermination. This means that there is a relative absence of intelligibility.

We must also not be surprised if the determination of the free will, which is situated precisely between the universal and the particular, the one and the multiple, pure good and mixed good, is not positively intelligible as to all that it is. How could there be an infallibly determinate sufficient reason for performing the free act, for passing from the universal to a certain particular, rather than to a certain other, from the infinite to a certain finite quantity or quality, rather than to a certain other?

There is *indetermination in volition because there is indetermination in the intellect* (indifference of judgment). There is

determination in the intellect, because there is *indetermination* or potentiality *in being*, because being is divided into potentiality and act. The problem of liberty is thus brought back to the primary division of being.

To the indetermination in the wished-for good there must be a corresponding indetermination in the will which wishes it. Relatively to the created will, no possible being has a right to existence. If then a possible being, amongst many others, comes into existence, that is due to the ineffable and more than mysterious *liberty* which is analogous in the order of action to what is *essence* and *matter* in the order of being. Just as the finite essence limiting existence is a non-being which is, just as matter limiting the form is also a non-being which is, so also the motive of liberty is a sufficient reason which can determine, but does not determine infallibly. It is the inevitable mystery of the relations prevailing between right and fact. There is even in this more than a mystery. Why?

"A free action of the future," says St. Thomas (IIa IIae, q. 171, a. 3), "is, in a sense, more beyond human knowledge than is the mystery of the Trinity." This mystery, indeed, is perfectly knowable *in itself*, but it is not naturally so *for us*, on account of the weakness of our created intellect. *The free actions of the future in themselves are not knowable, because the truth of them is not determined.* "Certain things in themselves are not knowable, as future contingent things, the truth of which is not determined." Aristotle said the same thing in the *Perihermenias*, Bk. I, ch. ix, comment. of St. Thomas, lect. 14.

Liberty is more than mysterious, for we can say of it what St. Thomas said of prime matter, that God Himself cannot know matter in itself, independently of its composites. "For matter in itself can neither exist nor be known" (Ia, q. 15, a. 3 ad 3um). The supercomprehension of causes invoked by Molina could never enable God to foresee with certainty how a certain created

liberty will decide in certain precise circumstances, unless He Himself decreed to premove it in a certain way rather than a certain other. There is in this something undetermined which is unintelligible even for God. To hold, with Molina and Suarez, that there is a foreknowledge without predetermining decrees, is to end fatally in determinism of circumstances. Here only Leibniz is true to his principles, as he pointed out to the Molinists (*Théod.*, I, sec. 48).[74]

"It is above all peculiarly bold," wrote V. Brochard, "to admit the existence of an irreducible and, as the Germans say, an illogical element in the thought. However, this conception presents certain advantages . . . (it allows of the admission of) free will which exists at least on apparent grounds and for which Intellectualism can find no place."[75]

This element, call it what you will, is nothing else but the non-being of Plato or, better still, the δύναμις of Aristotle. Brochard himself has shown several times that the existence of non-being is "one of the dominant ideas of the Platonic system. Only non-being makes possible the communication in the participation of ideas between them, and consequently the existence of the world, the possibility of affirmative judgment and that of error."[76]

Aristotle, by his division of being into potency and act (*Metaph.*, Bk. IX), fixed with marvelous precision what must be understood by this non-being which in a certain way is: *potency* or *being as yet undetermined.* Leibniz did not understand the possibility of this intermediary between pure nothingness and act; he substituted *force* for potency, and he considered it to be

[74] "It is amusing to see how the Molinists torment themselves to make their way out of a labyrinth from which there is absolutely no escape. . . . They will never, therefore, get out of trouble unless they admit a predetermination in the preceding act of the free creature which inclines it to determine itself." The Thomists have always said that the *scientia media* of necessity leads to Psychological Determinism. Cf. Billuart, *De Deo*, diss. VI, a. 6, secs. 5, 6.

[75] Brochard, *De l'erreur*, 2d ed., p. 265.

[76] *Année philosophique*, 1906, p. 17; *De l'erreur*, pp. 15–27.

but a prevented act. All indetermination thus disappeared, and this should have led him to admit the determinism of absolute Intellectualism. Contrary to this, the affirmation of undetermined being contains implicitly the solution of the problem of liberty. Far from being excluded by Intellectualism, liberty is thus based upon it; whereas only spontaneity or chance will ever find a place in Empiricism.

This solution will appear in a somewhat clearer light when we state the problem in God, when we study the sovereign independence of the self-subsisting Being with regard to everything created, and the liberty of the creative act in the choice of the world and of the elect. By this we shall see more clearly that every compound of being and non-being, however perfect this may be, is infinitely far from pure being which receives no further perfection by its realization. We shall see that there can be no infallibly determinate sufficient reason which entails the realization of a certain finite thing rather than a certain other; everything finite is infinitely far from the Infinite. To endeavor, like Spinoza and even Leibniz, to give a perfectly intelligible and, as it were, geometrical explanation of the co-existence of the finite and the Infinite, is to posit the principle of Determinism and consequently of Pantheism, which is the absurd identification of the finite with the Infinite.

But does not our solution now seem acceptable to all those who, with Plato, Aristotle, and St. Thomas, admit the priority of being over intellect? Secrétan believed he had safeguarded liberty by denying the objectivity of first principles. Quite to the contrary, there is no place for liberty in an Intellectualism which is not at the same time realistic. If there is priority of being, conceived as an absolute over intellect conceived as relative to being, it is not necessary that everything in the real be positively intelligible, that it be possible to deduce from the principle of reason the transition from the uncreated Being to the created, from

the Infinite to the finite, from the One to the multiple, from the universal to the particular. Intellectualism limits itself by positing itself as a *realism* and by distinguishing in being, which it recognizes as having priority over thought, an element fully intelligible, namely, act and another element profoundly obscure for the intellect, but necessary for solving the arguments of Parmenides and explaining as a function of being both multiplicity and becoming.

Leibniz rejects this solution, because at bottom, as Boutroux remarks, "Leibniz does not, like Plato, make the intellect dependent on truth, but, having adopted the modern viewpoint of the glorification of personality, he sees an intellect and a will to be the indispensable support of truth (Erdm., 562)."[77]

That can truly be said of logical truth which is to be found only in judgment, but not of ontological truth which is identical with knowable being. It is only in a cognitive being and in one that relates to knowable being that we can conceive of intellect. Being, on the contrary can be conceived without it. Leibniz failed to realize the priority of being over intellect just as he confounded potency with force which according to him is a prevented act; for him this must inevitably end in absolute Intellectualism and Determinism.

We may even ask ourselves if his dynamic philosophy does not logically lead to the evolutionist intellectualism of Hegel which *refers being to thought,* what is to what must be, the actual fact to right, success to morality.[78] From this point of view, we must

[77] Boutroux, *La Monadologie;* Review, p. 84. Ollé-Laprune likewise says that the Rationalist *thesis* presents itself to us under five aspects: "being refers back to thought, volition to thought; reason does not presuppose anything else as its basis; natural or supernatural faith reduces itself to reason; reason exercises a supreme control over all knowledge." Cf. *La Raison et le Rationalisme,* quoted in the *Annales de philos. chrétienne,* April 1907.

[78] As Boutroux remarks in his criticism of the *Monadologie,* p. 129: "The dominant idea of Leibniz is that of *tendency* considered as intermediary between potency and action. Constituting the substratum of things, *tendency,* thus con-

affirm that the fundamental reality is *becoming,* and we must necessarily exclude the principle of contradiction from reason and reality, in order to make a law of minor logic, of the understanding which is concerned with abstractions. To make of becoming the fundamental reality is to deny the principle of identity as the fundamental law of the real, or, what amounts to the same thing, it is to affirm that the intrinsic nature of things is a realized contradiction. To deny the pure Act or the pure Good which is to being as A is to A, is to posit absurdity as the root of everything. On this point the absolute Libertarians, such as Bergson and Le Roy, join hands with Hegel in his absolute Intellectualism.[79] These two extreme systems establish a point of contact in so far as both identify contradictories in becoming.

In maintaining the subordination of will to intellect St. Thomas escapes Psychological Determinism, because he affirms more vehemently than Leibniz the dependence of intellect on being. The only possible intermediary between the absolute Intellectualism of Hegel and the absolute Libertism of Secrétan and the fol-

ceived, unites and harmonizes these contrary properties, the co-existence of which could not be explained." Mere possibles are themselves defined in the Leibnizian system by this positive tendency to existence, from which arises the moral necessity imposed upon God to create and to create a certain possible world, rather than a certain other. As Boutroux points out (*ibid.,* p. 131): *"The sufficient reason of Leibniz ends by becoming, with Hegel, the identity of contradictories."*

[79] A similar contradiction is to be found in the works of Secrétan. He writes: "A liberty without intelligence is impossible; it would be confounded with chance which is not a form of causality, but its negation. Now it is, indeed, the idea of liberty that we have obtained. A potency which would determine itself without knowing the law according to which it is realized! These are but words that contradict each other. No, the free being is intelligent; it is useless to insist on this point." *La philosophie de la liberté,* 2d ed., I, 403.

"But quite the contrary," says Pillon on this point; "we must strongly insist on it," for we should have to say whether the intellect in the Absolute conditions liberty as with us, which would mean the ruination of Secrétan's system, or whether the reverse is the case and "absolute liberty is confounded with this radical contingency which they tell us is the negation of causality. There is the dilemma which presents itself and which certainly is deserving of some notice. Secrétan pays no attention to it, not making the least effort to escape it." Pillon, *La philosophie de Ch. Secrétan,* p. 33.

lowers of "the new philosophy" is not Leibnizian Intellectualism, but this philosophy of the concept first and foremost realistic, which was prepared by Socrates, developed by Plato, and systematized by Aristotle; it may be called the *philosophy of being* in opposition to the philosophy of the phenomenon or that of becoming. Theologians who affirm the existence of both divine and human liberty, appealing to revelation, claim to remain faithful to the principles of true Intellectualism, which is nothing else but this philosophy of being in which the order of specification and of essences pertains to the intellect, the order of exercise or of existences and individuals to the will. There is no antinomy between Intellectualism and Liberty, if Intellectualism is at the same time a realism, if the intellect consents to be measured by being and does not claim to be the measure of being, if it proves conclusively the infinite disproportion between the universal and the particular and does not claim to deduce the latter from the former, the multiple from the one, or the finite from the infinite.

This whole discussion against Determinism can be summed up as follows:

Objection: The principle of Determinism is that one and the same cause in the same circumstances always produces the same effect; a change in the effect without a predisposing change in the cause or circumstances would be an effect without a *raison d'être,* which is impossible. But liberty of indifference placed twice in the same circumstances could one time accept the proposed object and the other time refuse it. Therefore liberty of indifference would be a violation of the principle of *raison d'être,* which cannot be violated.

Reply: The major must be distinguished. This principle is true of a cause determined to but one effect, such as a natural cause, although it must be actually operating in the two cases. This principle does not apply immediately to a cause which is undetermined, such as the will. This latter is determined, of course,

as regards universal good, but not as regards particular goods.

1st instance: But the will cannot choose a particular good unless it be determined by the intellect. The intellect, however, having the same particular good presented to it twice in the same circumstances, cannot change its judgment; this would be contrary to the principle of *raison d'être*. Therefore the will, having the same particular good presented to it twice in the same circumstances, cannot change its choice.

Reply: The Major must be distinguished. The will is determined by the intellect in the order of specification or formal causality; but it determines the intellect in the order of efficient causality for this particular reason rather than for a certain other. And when it is a question of an act to be performed, priority is to be attributed purely and simply to efficient causality. It pertains therefore to the will to act or not to act.

2d instance: But even in the order of exercise liberty does not differ from spontaneity and cannot *prefer* to act rather than to refrain from acting, unless it be determined formally by the intellect. The intellect, however, being confronted twice with the same action to be performed in the same circumstances, cannot judge one time that it is suitable to act and the other time that it is not so; the change in this judgment would be contrary to the principle of *raison d'être*. Therefore liberty of exercise, if it differs from mere spontaneity, is impossible. It can be only a spontaneity enlightened by reason or misled by the imagination.

Reply: The minor must be distinguished. I agree that this change of judgment would be contrary to the principle of *raison d'être,* if there were an infallibly determinate *raison d'être* for the transition from desiring universal good to willing a certain particular good rather than a certain other; on the other hand, this change is not repugnant if there is no infallibly determinate *raison d'être* for the transition from the infinite to a certain finite quantity or quality rather than to a certain other.

3d instance: The principle of *raison d'être* which can be demonstrated by the method of reduction to absurdity, extends, like the principle of contradiction, to all modes of being and action. But it would not be so, if there were no determinate *raison d'être* for the choice. Hence there must be a determinate *raison d'être* for the transition from desiring universal good to willing a certain particular good rather than a certain other.

Reply: The major must be distinguished. This principle extends not *univocally* but *analogically,* to all modes of being and action; thus the notion itself of being, which is analogous, applies proportionately both to actual and potential being. A similar distinction is to be made in the minor. Choice presupposes a *sufficient* reason which of itself can determine it; it does not presuppose a *sufficient* reason which of itself *determines* it *effectively.* Thus being is either actual or potential.

62) *The divine attributes of liberty and wisdom.*

From what we know of the relations between the human intellect and the will in the free act, it is possible for us to solve the antinomies which, according to the Determinists and the Libertarians, would seem to exist between the necessity of the truths contemplated by divine wisdom and creative liberty.

Spinoza refuses to acknowledge liberty in God, his purpose being to have all things exist by the entirely geometrical necessity of the divine nature. Consequently, all possibles are realized; good and evil happen necessarily, and concern us alone, having nothing to do with God.

The Cartesians, on the contrary, under the pretext of freeing the divine will from the yoke of necessity, have made it completely indifferent, with an indifference of equilibrium. According to their view, God by an arbitrary decree, has established the distinction between good and evil, between eternal truths and the essences of things. The Nominalists with Ockham had upheld

the same view. On the other hand, St. Thomas said: "To maintain that justice depends simply on the will of God (*ex simplici voluntate*), is to say that the divine will is not directed by wisdom; and this is a blasphemy." [80]

Leibniz [81] disapproves of the absolute Determinism of Spinoza, looking upon it as an absurd and ignoble system, in which neither understanding nor will is left to the author of nature. He has no difficulty in showing that everything is not geometrically necessary in creation. The geometrically necessary proposition is that one, the contrary of which implies a contradiction, *e.g.*, $2 + 2 = 4$. But no contradiction is implied for Spinoza to have died somewhere else than at The Hague; the proposition, "Spinoza died at The Hague," is not, therefore, geometrically necessary. Moreover, Leibniz declares, against the Cartesians, that it is dishonoring God to make Him indifferent to good and evil, to say, for instance, that if God had not positively forbidden murder, this act would not be sinful. This doctrine, he adds, plunges the just and the unjust into hopeless scepticism, for nothing would oblige God to keep His word. Between the true and the false, the just and the unjust, there is no choice for God. Leibniz claims to solve the antinomy caused by the doctrines of Spinoza and Descartes by his conception of moral necessity, the intermediary between absolute necessity and the liberty of equilibrium. This moral necessity is that proper to the sufficient reason in its application to existences; it consists in the choice of the better. It inclines the divine will infallibly without necessitating it. The divine choice is thus freed from geometrical necessity, but it would be an arbitrary selection of either the irrational or chance, and therefore as unworthy of God. Hence we must conclude, according to the author of *Théodicée,* that God would be neither good

[80] St. Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 23, a. 6: "Whether justice in created things depends simply on the will of God."

[81] Concerning this point in discussion, cf. *Œuvres de Leibnitz* (Erdmann ed.), 139, 558, 563; and *Théodicée* (Janet ed.), secs. 36, 43–54, 104, 196, 201, 309, 360.

nor wise, if He had not created.[82] and if He had not created the best of possible worlds. All the divine decrees are morally necessary, that of the Incarnation as well as that of Creation, and even that by which God has chosen and predestined a certain man, rather than a certain other (*Théod.*, sec. 104).

In the philosophy of Leibniz this divine determinism is associated with his dynamist theory of possibles. Every possible, according to Leibniz,[83] has pent up within it a *tendency* to existence which is proportionate to its perfection, its wealth of integrity, order, or compossibility. Existence, moreover, can be only the demand (*exigentia*) of the essence to develop and unfold itself. From this it follows that, of the infinity of possible combinations, that one exists necessarily by which the greatest quantity of essence or possibility is brought into existence. The divine *fiat* thus gives existence to the best of possible worlds. "If there had not been a world which was the best, God would not have created one," since He does nothing without a reason (*Théod.*, secs. 8, 201). Everything, even to the least detail, is necessarily ordained in the world, according to the principle of the best; nothing can change in the universe without everything being changed at the same time (Erdm., 506). It is the best that is possible of conception, because it realizes the highest degree of variety in unity, and of unity in variety. Evil is explained in the following manner: every creature is by its essence necessarily imperfect, less perfect than God, and variety requires that all creatures should not have the same degree of perfection; to have a thousand well-bound copies of Virgil in one's library, would not be called reasonable. Pain and sin are the result of the imperfection of creatures and the condition of a greater good. The shadows set off the colors; a discord inserted where necessary

[82] *Œuvres de Leibnitz* (Erdmann ed.), 563 a.

[83] *Op. cit.*, 147 b, 148 a. In our exposition of this Leibnizian theory we are following Boutroux's criticism of the *Monadologie*, p. 91.

makes the harmony more conspicuous; we want tragedies to move us to tears. In the intellectual order, divine grace has been given to us superabundantly where sin had abounded. God certainly can in no way be the cause of sin, but it is fitting for Him to permit it. Leibniz says (*Théod.*, sec. 10): "On Holy Saturday, in the churches of the Roman rite, we sing:

> O truly necessary sin of Adam,
> Which the death of Christ has blotted out!
> O blessed sin, that merited
> Such and so great a Redeemer!"

"Thus," concludes Leibniz, "if the world were without the least of the evils which happen in it, the world would no longer be, all things taken into consideration, the one which was found to be the best, by the Creator who chose it" (*Théod.*, sec. 9). Such are the exigencies of "universal mathematics"! But is divine wisdom merely mathematics?

Does this Leibnizian doctrine of moral necessity and absolute optimism leave God truly free? Does it not reduce His action to the influence of an impersonal reason? The Church, as we have seen in the previous pages, rejects this thesis of moral necessity and defines that God has created with absolute liberty free from all necessity.[84] A Rosminian proposition affirming the moral necessity of creation was condemned,[85] also one of Abelard's theses which states that God can do only what He has done and as He has done, and that in particular He must not and cannot

[84] Vatican Council (Denzinger, n. 1783): "God . . . *with absolute freedom of counsel* . . . created the creature." "If anyone shall say that God created, not by His will free from all necessity, but by a necessity equal to the necessity whereby He loves Himself: let him be anathema." Denzinger, n. 1805.

[85] "The love by which God loves Himself even in creatures, and which is the motive that determines Him to create, constitutes a *moral necessity* which in the most perfect being always brings forth the effect; for it is only in the many imperfect beings that necessity of this kind leaves liberty intact on either side." Denzinger, n. 1908.

prevent evil.[86] It is only by sacrificing liberty that Leibniz solves the antinomy between wisdom and liberty.

The true solution is set forth by St. Thomas in Part I of the *Theological Summa;* it results from his general theory on liberty. We can sum up this teaching in four propositions. (1) God necessarily loves Himself; (2) He creates freely without moral necessity according to a real fittingness which does not urge Him infallibly, and which He could leave out of consideration, still remaining good and wise; (3) God could have chosen a *better* world, but He could not have arranged its elements *better* than those of the actual world or shown greater wisdom in their arrangement; (4) there are in God free preferences which are their own *raison d'être,* and in which His supreme and absolute liberty shines forth.

It is easy to see how these conclusions are derived from the Thomist doctrine of liberty, and how they safeguard at once the divine wisdom and its free choice.

1) *God necessarily loves Himself.* "The divine will," says St. Thomas, "has a necessary relation to the divine goodness, since that is its proper object. Hence God wills or loves His own goodness necessarily, even as we will our own happiness necessarily, and as any other faculty has a necessary relation to its proper and principal object; for instance, the sight to color, since it is of the very essence of this faculty to tend toward the object which specifies it" (Ia, q. 19, a. 3). Moreover, if man can cease thinking of happiness and actually willing it, which constitutes the liberty of exercise of this act, God cannot cease knowing and loving Himself, all liberty hereby disappearing, both that of exercise and that of specification. It is the same with the blessed who un-

[86] "That God can do or not do only those things, or only in the manner or time in which He does them and not otherwise. . . . That God neither could nor should prevent evil." Denzinger, n. 374 f. See also the errors of Eckhard. Denzinger, nn. 501 f.

ceasingly see God as He is in Himself and cannot cease loving Him.

2) *God creates freely.* In fact, St. Thomas goes on to say: "But God wills things apart from Himself in so far as they are ordered to His own goodness as their end. Now in willing an end, we do not necessarily will things that conduce to it, unless they are such that the end cannot be attained without them; as we will to take food to preserve life, or to take a ship in order to cross the sea. But we do not necessarily will things without which the end is attainable, such as a horse for a journey which we can make on foot, for we can make the journey without one. The same applies to other means. Hence, since the goodness of God is perfect, and can exist without other things inasmuch as no perfection can accrue to Him from them, it follows that His willing things apart from Himself is not absolutely necessary. Yet it can be necessary by supposition, for supposing that He wills a thing, then He is unable not to will it, as His will cannot change."

The creative act is free as regards liberty of exercise, and we may even add that it has liberty of specification. Does this mean that it is without either motive or sufficient reason? Not at all. It is most proper for God to create. St. Thomas explains this by means of the following comparison: "Natural things," he says, "have a natural inclination not only towards their proper good, to acquire it if not possessed, and, if possessed, to rest therein, but also to spread abroad their own good among others so far as possible. Hence we see that every agent, in so far as it is perfect and in act, produces its like. It pertains therefore, to the nature of the will to communicate as far as possible to others the good possessed; and especially does this pertain to the divine will, from which all perfection is derived in some kind of likeness. Hence, if natural things, in so far as they are perfect, communicate their

good to others, much more does it pertain to the divine will to communicate by likeness its own good to others as much as is possible. Thus then, He wills both Himself to be, and other things to be; but Himself as the end, and other things as ordained to that end, inasmuch as it befits the divine goodness that other things should be partakers therein" (Ia, q. 19, a. 2).

Is this fittingness so forceful as to constitute, according to Leibniz, a moral necessity? Does it follow that God would be neither good nor wise if He did not create, and that a necessary perfection would be wanting to Him? Not at all. Cajetan explains this as follows in his commentary on the article of St. Thomas just quoted. He shows how the principle: *good is diffusive of itself,* must be understood *analogically* or proportionately, like the notion itself of being on which it is based, and that of appetite or will. It is a natural and necessary perfection for natural beings to reproduce themselves. It is a free perfection for free beings to give of their plenitude. Truly a created spirit would be neither good nor wise, if it claimed to isolate itself in its interior life and love only itself, without thinking of others; its perfection increases when it loves them, and it must love them. On the other hand, there can be no increase of perfection in God; it is already of itself essentially infinite. All created perfections preexist eminently in it, in a light and a life which are incomparably more beautiful and richer than created life or light. If God had not created, He would be none the less infinitely good in His interior life. Revelation even adds that He would be none the less diffusive of Himself, through the communication of the whole of His nature both to His Son generated from all eternity and to the Spirit of love. It is not, therefore, morally necessary for God to create.

The real expediency of creation is such that it would not have been improper for God not to create. It is expedient at times for a rich man to give most liberally to a poor man, though he could

have refrained from so doing, without any imperfection, and the gratitude of the poor man must respond to the gratuity of the gift. In this sense Cajetan (*loc. cit.*) says: "The creative act is a free perfection, the absence of which would be no imperfection." But as this act (cf. *infra,* n. 63), is not superadded, by way of an accident, to the necessary act by which God loves Himself, the other Thomists prefer to say that the creative act does not add to God's perfection; it presupposes merely that of pure Act and is only extrinsically defectible on account of the object willed.

The action of God *ad extra* depends immediately upon His mysterious liberty, so much so that the divine knowledge itself cannot, without a divine decree, foresee whether or not creation will take place.

3) *God could have chosen a better world, but He could not have arranged its elements better than those of the present world.* Refuting in advance the theories of Leibniz and Malebranche, St. Thomas (Ia, q. 25, a. 5) wrote as follows: "Some think that the divine power is restricted to this present course of events through the order of the divine wisdom and justice, so that another world could not come into existence. But since the power of God, which is His essence, is nothing else but His wisdom, it can indeed be fittingly said that there is nothing in the divine power which is not in the order of divine wisdom; for the divine wisdom includes the whole potency of the divine power. Yet the order placed in creation by divine wisdom, in which order the notion of his justice consists, is not so adequate to the divine wisdom that the divine wisdom should be restricted to this present order of things. Now it is clear that the whole idea of order which a wise man puts into things made by him is taken from their end. So, when the end is proportionate to the things made for that end, the wisdom of the maker is restricted to some definite order. But the divine goodness is an end exceeding beyond all proportion things created. Hence the divine wisdom is

not so restricted to any particular order that no other course of events could happen." Leibniz considered this problem too much as a problem of mathematics in which there is a fixed proportion between the different elements; he did not sufficiently take into account the end itself of the creative act, that is, the infinite goodness which manifests itself in the communication of its riches; he failed to understand the import of these words of St. Thomas: *"The divine goodness is the end which exceeds beyond all proportion created things."*

Leibniz says further: "Supreme wisdom could not fail to choose the best . . . and there would be something to correct in the actions of God if there were a better way of doing things" (*Théod.*, 8).

St. Thomas (Ia, q. 25, a. 6 ad 1um.) provided an answer in advance for this objection, when he wrote: "The proposition: God can make a thing better than He makes it, can be understood in two ways. If the word *'better'* is taken substantively, as meaning a *better object,* this proposition is true; for God can make better the things that exist and make better things than those which He has made. But if the word *'better'* is taken as an adverb, implying *in a more perfect manner,* then we cannot say that God can make anything better than He makes it, for He cannot make it from greater wisdom and goodness." His answer to the third objection is as follows: "The universe, the present creation being supposed, cannot be better, on account of the most beautiful order given to things by God, in which the good of the universe consists. For if any one thing were bettered, the proportion of order would be destroyed as, if one string were stretched more than it ought to be, the melody of a harp would be destroyed."

This is tantamount to saying that the world is a masterpiece, but another divine masterpiece is possible. The organism of the plant is less perfect than that of the animal, and yet, granted its

parts and the end that it must attain, there could not be a better arrangement of its parts. A certain symphony of Beethoven is a masterpiece without any fault in it; however, it does not exclude the possibility of a masterpiece of the same kind or of another order. The holiness of the Apostle Peter does not exclude that of St. Paul; both are infinitely far from the holiness of God. The Incarnation alone represents to us the highest possible union of the divine with a created nature, but the problem remains for the degree of grace and glory of the human soul of Christ; however high the degree, there is still an infinite difference between the intensity of the beatific vision which the soul of Jesus enjoyed and the comprehensive vision which cannot belong to any but the divine nature (IIIa, q. 7, a. 12 ad 2um).

4) *Finally there are divine predilections which are their own raison d'être.* Sovereign and absolute liberty shines forth from them without in the least detracting from divine wisdom. "Why He draws one, and another He draws not, seek not to judge," says St. Augustine, "if thou dost not wish to err." [87] St. Thomas adds: "In the things of nature, a reason can be assigned, since primary matter is altogether uniform, why one part of it was fashioned by God from the beginning under the form of fire, another under the form of earth, that there might be a diversity of species in things of nature. Yet why this particular part of matter is under this particular form, and that under another, depends upon the simple will of God; as from the simple will of the artificer it depends that this stone is in this part of the wall, and that in another; although the plan requires that some stones should be in this place, and some in that place." [88] Thus there are in God free preferences, which are their own *raison d'être;* here divine liberty shows itself to be supreme. These are none the less made with infinite wisdom: the absolute dominating indifference

[87] *Super Joannem,* 12: 32, tract. 26.
[88] See Ia, q. 23, a. 5 ad 3um.

of the divine volition with regard to both sides equally convincing, is based precisely upon the divine wisdom which manifests the equality of both sides and their infinite distance from the divine goodness which is the end of all things. Wisdom shows therefore that, in this case, the free determination can come only from liberty itself, and judges that it is *fitting* for it to be so. There is always self-determination in free acts, but here self-determination is as complete as can be.

What reconciles this all the more so with divine wisdom is that election in God presupposes love, whereas with us the reverse is the case. "In us," says St. Thomas (Ia, q. 23, a. 4), "the will in loving does not cause good, but we are incited to love by the good which already exists; and therefore we choose someone to love, and so election in us precedes love. In God, however, it is the reverse. For His will, by which in loving He wishes good to someone, is the cause of that good (of grace) possessed by some in preference to others. Thus in God love precedes election." A free predilection which is its own sufficient reason, is not, therefore, contrary to divine wisdom. Moreover, supreme wisdom judges that it is fitting for it to be so.

"The Spirit breatheth where He will" (John 3:8); why does the Lord call this soul and not that other to the highest degree of sanctity? Why is it that this soul will not rest satisfied until it has become a victim of love like the Crucified? There is only one answer to this, the answer of St. Paul: "It is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy" (Rom. 9:16). The sovereign wisdom, far from preventing them, delights in these entirely gratuitous, absolutely free predilections for which nothing in us could be the impelling motive.

It would be blasphemous, says St. Thomas,[89] to maintain that the order of justice or the distinction between good and evil depends solely upon the will of God. God would cease to be

[89] St. Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 23, a. 6.

necessarily good. His essential glory depends upon His sovereign goodness which He necessarily loves above all things. In this supreme order He necessarily wills what is best *in se,* infinite perfection which He Himself is. He is also the primary object of charity in us.

But there are other goods, which are external and secondary, upon which the goodness of God does not depend. *The glory* that He derives from them is *external.* And this glory *is all the greater according as these freely willed goods manifest to a greater extent the liberty of His good pleasure.* They are not always *materially the best in themselves,* but they are *formally* the *best for God,*[90] precisely because they express His sovereign liberty,

[90] *Op. cit.,* q. 6, a. 2; q. 23, a. 6. John of St. Thomas (*De voluntate Dei,* on Ia, q 19, disp. 4, a. 5, and a. 7, n. 21) replies as follows to the objection resumed by Leibniz, Malebranche, and all the mathematicians who defend the theory of absolute Intellectualism: "God loves Himself most perfectly and in the highest degree. But he who perfectly loves someone wishes him *that which is better according to the good pleasure* of the beloved, not as if it were absolutely better in itself, or as if it seems better to us. But of all the goods which contribute to the glory of God, some contribute to the internal and essential glory of God, which consists of His goodness and all His attributes, and these God necessarily wills, not as better, but as *best.* Other goods are extrinsic and secondary on which the former in no way depend, and the glory accruing to God from them is *extrinsic* and so much the better for Him, the more He operates in them according to the free counsel of His will.

"Hence, since God wills for Himself good perfectly and most ardently, and it is in His power voluntarily to choose whatsoever of these extrinsic goods, *He always wills for Himself the better,* so long as He chooses from all these goods that which is more in conformity with His will.

"Hence, not only does God will for Himself the better of divine goods, but also of created goods, He wills Himself *what is formally better,* that is to say, what is more according to His will, although *on the part of the thing chosen, for itself it is not always that which is absolutely better;* but because this very thing is that which He willed and a complete expression of His will, this very thing is better formally and *more for His glory.*

"Neither can he who loves someone most perfectly love more for his glory, than by leaving all things to his good pleasure and to the fulfilment of his will in all things. In no other way do the just will the greater glory of God, than by willing that His will be done on earth as in heaven, whether the things are in themselves better or not."

Thus *religious obedience* commands us always to do, if not what is *materially*

His absolute independence with regard to everything created. "By the grace of God I am what I am," said St. Paul (I Cor. 15:10). Why have I been chosen rather than another? "Because it pleased the Most High; according to His good pleasure" (Eph. 1:9).

We should not seek mathematical exactness in the divine choice; it is of infinite suavity, being counterbalanced only by divine supremacy of which it is the expression. Thus a singer, although carefully observing the rules of singing, retains a spontaneity and freedom which prove the very command he has of his art. He is not a slave to his principles, but in his singing dominates them.

Sovereign wisdom plays in creating the world ("playing in the world," Prov. 8:31). In souls it plants divine seeds more or less beautiful according to its good pleasure.

The song of divine love is perfectly flawless and absolutely free. It is the profound unity of these diverse qualities which constitutes its sublime harmony.[91]

Absolute Intellectualism and Voluntarism are narrow views; they ignore the beauty of God. We see that the spirit of their system is the destruction of all synthesis. Like heresy, which means a choosing, they choose only a part of the truth. The solution of the antinomy is to be found in a higher harmony which is the closest unity in a completeness of diversity.

the best in itself, at least what is *formally the best*, in accordance with God's good pleasure.

[91] This sovereign liberty of divine wisdom is chanted in Prov. 8:23. "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His ways, before He had made any thing from the beginning. I was set up from eternity, and of old before the earth was made. The depths were not as yet and I was already conceived. . . . When He prepared the heavens I was present; when with a certain law and compass He enclosed the depths; when He established the sky above, and poised the fountains of waters; when He compassed the sea with its bounds, and set a law to the waters that they should not pass their limits; when He balanced the foundations of the earth. *I was with Him forming all things: and was delighted every day, playing before Him at all times; playing in the world. And my delights were to be with the children of men.*"

63) *The divine attributes of liberty and immutability.*

There is another apparent antinomy mentioned at times by the modern philosophers; but they generally ignore the profound study made of it by the theologians[92] who could furnish them with a series of objections logically arranged in Scholastic form. Spencer is often clumsy in the difficulties that he raises against the theology of the Schools. The classical objections examined by the Scholastics were deeper and more plausible.

The preceding difficulty had to do with the motive of the free act in God; this one concerns the exercise of this act. If this act is free, it is contingent, and could as well not be; there is therefore something *defectible* in God, something that might be wanting. Hence God is no longer pure Act, absolutely immutable and perfect. He is only in act as far as this is possible and retains potentialities which are actualized by the very determinations of His liberty. His will, objects St. Thomas,[93] is of itself undetermined and consequently imperfect; it is capable of being further determined; and by what motion of a higher order could it be determined? That the divine free act is eternal and irrevocable is of little consequence; from all eternity it was possible for Him not to be; there is in God a contingent and superadded reality which is contrary to the immutability of pure Act. If in answer to this we say that the reality of this act in God is necessary, then this very act is no longer free.

St. Thomas (Ia, q. 19, a. 3 ad 4um) replies as follows: "Sometimes a necessary cause has a non-necessary relation to an effect, owing to a deficiency in the effect and not in the cause. Even so, the sun's power has a non-necessary relation to some contingent events on this earth, owing to a defect not in the solar power, but

[92] Cf. St. Thomas, Ia, q. 19, a. 3, 7; *Contra Gentes*, Bk. I, ch. lxxxii; *De veritate*, q. 23, a. 4. See the commentaries of Cajetan, Bannez, John of St. Thomas, Salmanticenses, Gonet, Billuart, on Ia, q. 19, a. 3.

[93] See Ia, q. 19, a. 3, 4a and 5a.

in the effect that proceeds not necessarily from the cause. In the same way, *that God does not necessarily will some of the things that He wills, does not result from defect in the divine will, but from a defect belonging to the nature of the thing willed;* for all finite things cannot add anything to infinite perfection, and supreme goodness has no need of diffusing itself in them in order to be infinite goodness."

"A naturally contingent cause," adds St. Thomas, "must be determined to act by some external power. The divine will, which by its nature is necessary, determines itself to will things to which it has no necessary relation."

Is there a plurality of voluntary acts in God; the necessary act by which He loves Himself and the creative free act? "The divine will," replies St. Thomas, "by one and the same act, wills Himself and other things. Now his relation to Himself is necessary and natural; whereas His relation to other things is by way of a kind of fittingness, not necessary and natural, nor violent and unnatural, but free" (*Contra Gentes,* Bk. I, ch. lxxxii).

There is therefore nothing defectible in God; His free act is the necessary act of the love of Himself in so far as it terminates in an object which is able not to be loved and not to be willed.[94] *The defectibility is merely in this object, not in God.* It is useless to examine more at length the above-mentioned classical objections solved by the commentators of St. Thomas.

The apparent antinomy which is noted by the Agnostics is due to the fact that they consider the divine free act as a human free act, without rising to the analogous notion of liberty com-

[94] The divine free act is not, according to the Thomists, a logical relation to creatures. We cannot, indeed, conceive of it being without this logical relation, but in itself it is the unique act of the divine will upon which the existence of creatures really depends. There is therefore a real relation of creatures to the creative free act, and a logical relation of this latter to creatures. Thus sight bears a real relation to the object seen upon which it depends, whereas this latter which does not depend on it and receives from it no perfection, bears to it only a logical relation, that is to say, one which exists only in our mind.

mon to God and the intellectual creature. In us, since our will is only a power or faculty relative to good, the free act of election is added to it after the manner of a defectible accident, and it is really distinct from the first act of intention by which we necessarily will happiness. Our liberty is but the dominating indifference of a *potency* or faculty with regard to particular goods, and that because our will is not goodness itself but only a faculty which relates to goodness.

Divine liberty, on the contrary, is the *dominating indifference not of a potency but of a pure act of subsistent love.* It follows from this that defectibility is found only in the case of particular goods or creatures which can as well not be willed by God, since He already possesses, without them, the sovereign Good which is identical with His ever actual and eternally subsisting love.

Moreover, in God, the free act is eternal and is not subject to change. God does not begin to will what He did not will yesterday. It is without change of will that He wills and produces the change which is accomplished in things at the time fixed from all eternity (cf. n. 47). Mutability of the divine will is inconceivable. Says St. Thomas: "Since the will regards good, a man may in two ways begin to will a thing. In one way when that thing begins to be good for him, and this does not take place without a change in him. Thus when the cold weather begins, it becomes good to sit by the fire, though it was not so before. In another way, when he knows for the first time that a thing is good for him, though he did not know it before. Now it has already been shown that both the substance of God and His knowledge are entirely unchangeable" (Ia, q. 19, a. 7).

The angelic free will participates in the immutability of the divine free will on account of the perfection of knowledge in the pure spirit. He sees simultaneously and not successively, as we do, everything about a decision to be made. When he comes to a decision, he has seen everything, weighed all the motives for

or against. The knowledge acquired from the fortunate or unfortunate events of the future can in no way cause him to alter his decision made with full deliberation. Whatever may be said to make him change his mind, he can answer: I knew it. Thus the angel, by his first deliberate act concerning his last end is confirmed in either good or evil.[95] There can be no question in the angel of the possibility of the forgiveness of either venial or mortal sin; he sees too clearly. Intrinsic sanctity or perversity, such is the alternative for him. Right away, he goes to the essence of things and determines his state for all eternity. The philosophy of becoming must seem to him to be a very trifling error, born of the human imagination,[96] but unworthy of a pure spirit.

In the angel, however, as in man, free choice is still but the accidental act of a faculty or potency. If we conceive the pure act purified of all potentiality or imperfection, then only is it identical with the necessary act of the will, and that is to be found only in God. In this identification, liberty is not destroyed; rather it exists in a pure state, since it is the dominating indifference of pure Act itself with regard to everything created.

64) *Human liberty and the divine universal causality.*

As we have said, liberty in general is not incompatible with the principle of sufficient reason; the sufficient motive can determine (like sufficient grace), but does not determine effectively according to a moral necessity. Consequently the divine free will is compatible with sovereign wisdom, and is not contrary to the absolute immutability of pure Act. What shall we say now of human liberty, which is but an analogical resemblance of the

[95] Cf. Ia, q. 62, a. 5; q. 64, a. 2: *"Man's free will is flexible to the opposite both before and after choice; but the angel's free will is flexible to either opposite before the choice, but not after."*

[96] See Aristotle, *Metaph.*, Bk. IV, ch. v.

divine free will, although it is still truly liberty? Is it compatible with the universal causality of God?

Let us remark first of all that human liberty, although more knowable for us (*quoad nos*) than the primary liberty, is in itself (*quoad se*) more obscure. The mystery of free will in general is here involved in the obscurity belonging properly to everything that is unstable, versatile, and inconsistent. The liberty of the angel, whose act is irrevocable, since the motive is higher than the motives drawn from the passions, once this has been performed with the full light of the intellect, is already less obscure in itself than our liberty, although it seems to us more difficult to conceive because it is removed from our experience (Ia, q. 64, a. 2).

What shall we think, as regards the method, of a theological system which would take for its primary idea, not that of God, the pure Act and first universal cause, but the "grossly formed notion of liberty furnished by the brute fact of psychological consciousness," [97] a notion which, according to its particular exigencies, would limit the universal principle of causality and that of the universal causality of the primary Agent? Proceeding in this way, how can we avoid the reproach of anthropomorphism and of symbolism?

Such is not St. Thomas' method. He studies first the universal exigencies of first principles of reason and of being, then the essential exigencies of the divine nature known by reason and faith. The formal object of metaphysics is being and the first principles of being; the formal object of theology is God. It is therefore by the light of these principles that St. Thomas examines all the problems and must consider the problem of human liberty, and not in the reverse order.

[97] Gardeil, O.P., *Le donné révélé et la théologie*, p. 275; a comparison between Thomism and Molinism.

We have already set forth at sufficient length (nn. 49, b, and 52, c), with regard to foreknowledge and the divine motion, the Thomist solution of this problem. It may be summed up in these three texts of St. Thomas: "Since the divine will is perfectly efficacious, it follows not only that things are done which God wills to be done, but also that they are done *in the way* that He wills" (Ia, q. 19, a. 8). "Our free will is the *cause* of its act, but it does not of necessity have to be the first cause of its act. God is the first cause, who moves both natural and voluntary causes. And just as by moving natural causes He does not prevent their acts from being natural, so by moving voluntary causes *He does not deprive their actions of being voluntary; but rather is He the cause of this very thing in them;* for He operates in each thing according to its own nature that He has given it" (Ia, q. 83, a. 1 ad 3um). Thus a great teacher communicates to his pupils not only his knowledge, but also his mentality and method. "God immutably (*immutabiliter*) moves our will, because of the sovereign efficacy of His power which cannot fail. But liberty remains, because of the nature (and amplitude) of our will which is indifferent with regard to what it chooses. Thus in all things Providence operates infallibly, and yet contingent causes produce their effects contingently, for God moves all things proportionately according to the very mode of the nature of each being: *Deus omnia movet proportionabiliter, unumquodque secundum suum modum*" (*De malo,* q. 6, a. 1 ad 3um).

Thus the free mode of our acts not only is safeguarded, but is produced by God in us and with us. The divine motion does not force the will, because it operates according to the natural inclination of the latter. First of all, it directs the will to its adequate object which is universal good, and only after that to an inadequate object which is some particular good. Under the first aspect the divine motion constitutes the free mode of the act; it operates internally as we have already said, upon the very essence

of the will taken in all the vastness of its range, and directs it, in a sense, to good in all its grades before inclining it to tend toward some particular good.[98]

Thus God moves our free will *suavely and firmly*. If the divine motion were to lose its force, it would at once lose its suavity; being unable to reach what is especially delicate and intimate in us, it would remain outside us, as it were, overlaid upon our created activity; and this is unworthy of creative activity which is more intimate to us than we are to ourselves.

Our free act is therefore entirely our own as second cause, and entirely from God as first cause. When we perform the act, in virtue of the universal scope of our will and the indifference of our judgment we retain the power not to perform it (Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 4 ad 1um). It so indeed results at the end of deliberation, when all is in readiness for a free act, that our will thus prepared, demands, in a way, to be *moved to determine itself* exactly as God will move it. If the will could determine *itself* alone, our liberty would be the liberty of the primary liberty; the resemblance between the two would be univocal.[99]

There still remains the mystery which underlies all the great theological questions, the mystery of God, of the creative act, of the co-existence of the finite and the Infinite, and in this case the co-existence of uncreated action and created activity, of primary and secondary liberty. It is the very absence of mystery that

[98] See John of St. Thomas, on Ia, q. 19, disp. 5, a. 6, nn. 37–55.

[99] The motion by which God *moves* our will *to determine itself* is, moreover, correlative with objective motions such as are good example, good advice, good aspirations, all of which come under the providence of God. Previous to choice, there are also in us indeliberate movements which incline us to act one way rather than another, without infallibly entailing our choice. The will, thus disposed and prepared by all these *inefficacious* but *sufficient* motions (like the motive), demands somehow to do what God wishes to make it do freely. If in the acts which precede the definite choice there occurs a defect, a bad movement which inclines the will to make a bad choice, God is not the cause of this defect; the essentially defectible creature suffices to explain this. Cf. Guillermin, *Revue thomiste*, 1902, pp. 383–387.

would be surprising in this case. The seeming clearness of a simplist explanation is obtained only at the cost of an error. There must be a mystery in this, for our knowledge of the divine causality is merely analogical, and it is only relatively and negatively (supreme cause, non-premoved cause) that we come to know what properly constitutes it. We cannot therefore see *how* God *suavely and firmly* moves our liberty to determine itself, but we see that if He could not move it He would cease to be the universal cause; there would be a reality produced, that of our free determination, which would not depend upon the first Being, and which would be in us an absolute beginning, which is contrary to the principle of causality.

The opponents of the Thomist thesis would have it that we say: "God determines our choice," whereas we say: "God *moves* our will to *determine itself* freely in a certain manner." After thus misrepresenting our thesis, they find it easy to add that, like Calvinism, it destroys liberty because it leads to the conclusion that free will, moved and prompted by God, cannot resist. This thesis of the pseudo-Reformers was condemned by the Council of Trent, which defined (Sess. VI, ch. iv) that "the free will, moved and prompted by God, can dissent if it wishes," and that "God's inspiration can be rejected" (*ibid.*, ch. v).

This objection and others like it were made to St. Augustine by the Pelagians and Semi-Pelagians.[100] St. Thomas often refers to them and solves them.[101] Liberty remains because the *divine causality* produces *in us* and *with us* the *free mode of our act,* so that our will, under the influence of the divine motion and the indifference of our judgment, at the end of the deliberation, retains the *power* of not willing, for *its scope extends beyond* the

[100] Cf. *Epist. Prosperi ad S. Augustinum.* These objections will be found in Gonet (on Ia, disp. V, a. 4, sec. 2).

[101] See Ia, q. 19, a. 8; q. 105, a. 4; Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 4; *De veritate,* q. 6, a. 3, 5; q. 23, a. 5; *Contra Gentes,* Bk. III, chs. 88, 89, 90, 94. *De malo,* q. 6, a. 1; *De potentia,* q. 3, a. 7.

finite good which it chooses. "The divine will extends not only *to the doing of something* by the thing which it moves, *but also to its being done in a way which is fitting to the nature of that thing*. And therefore it would be more repugnant to the divine motion for the will to be moved *of necessity* (*i.e., without being in potentiality for its opposite*), which is not fitting to its nature, than for it to be moved freely, which is becoming to its nature" (Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 4 ad 1um). In willing, *we co-operate* with the divine action and determine ourselves as secondary cause, although we are moved to determine ourselves by the primary Cause.

This thesis is entirely different from that of the pseudo-Reformers, which was condemned in the fourth canon of the Council of Trent. The mere reading of this canon is enough to convince anyone of this fact: "If anyone shall say that man's free will, moved and excited by God, by assenting to God exciting and calling, nowise co-operates toward disposing and preparing itself for obtaining the grace of justification that it cannot refuse its consent if it would, but that, as something inanimate, it does nothing whatever and is merely passive: let him be anathema." [102]

That we may say the will can resist, it is sufficient, according to St. Thomas, that the will, under the efficacious motion of God, retain the *real power* of not acting. "But," he adds, "the act of resisting is *incompossible* with the efficacy of the divine motion." [103] Otherwise God would cease to be omnipotent, as St.

[102] Concerning the agreement of this canon with the Thomist thesis, cf. Reginaldus, O.P., *De mente Concilii Tridentini;* and Massoulié, O.P., *Divus Thomas sui interpres,* Vol. I, diss. 2, q. 9.

[103] St. Thomas, Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 4 ad 3um: "If God moves the will to anything, it is *incompossible* with this supposition, that the will be not moved thereto. But it is not *impossible* simply. Consequently it does not follow that the will is moved by God necessarily."

Still we must fully understand what is meant by the word "resistance." "Not according to the resistance offered to the agent, but according to the impediment of the effect," says St. Thomas (4, d. 11, q. 1, a. 3, *quaestiunc.* 3 ad 2um).

Augustine says in the *Enchiridion* (ch. xcvi). It is what St. Thomas and the Thomists continue to express by saying that the will, under the influence of grace, can resist *in sensu diviso,* but not *in sensu composito.*[104]

St. Thomas explains this classical distinction.[105] "The effect efficaciously willed by God is able *not* to be, but its non-existence is incompossible with the divine will. It is not incompossible that God should efficaciously will the salvation of Peter, and yet that Peter can be damned; but it is incompossible that God should efficaciously will the salvation of Peter, and yet that Peter be damned."

Thus we say, remarks St. Thomas,[106] that a white wall *can* be black, although white cannot be black and although the wall that is white cannot *at the same time* be black. A fortiori is this distinction verified when there is not only *contingency,* but *liberty,* on account of the predominating indifference of our will. It is this predominating indifference that Calvin denied.[107]

[104] St. Thomas writes (*De veritate,* q. 6, a. 4 ad 8um): "It is commonly said of this, that God is able to predestine one who is not predestined, or not to predestine one who is predestined; *in sensu composito* this is false, but *in sensu diviso* true. And therefore all those assertions which imply a *composite sense* are simply false." Cf. I Sent, dist. 38, q. 1, a. 5 ad 3um; Ia, q. 14, a. 13 ad 3um.

[105] *De veritate,* q. 23, a. 5 ad 3um: "Although the *non-existence of the effect* of the divine will is incompatible with the divine will, yet the *possibility* of the effect failing is compatible with the divine will; for these two statements are not incompatible: God wills to save this individual and he *can* be damned. But these two statements are incompatible: God wills this one to be saved and the same one is *damned.*"

[106] See Ia, q. 14, a. 13 ad 3um.

[107] Calvin admitted this distinction, but in a sense different from the *sensus divisus* and *sensus compositus.* In his opinion, man *under* the influence of the divine motion does not even retain the power of not acting, but it is only *afterwards* that he regains this power. Thus, he said, he whose feet are chained has not the power to run.

Calvin admitted this distinction not to prove that free will remains: that he denied. But his purpose in admitting it was to show that *simple contingency* is unaffected. In his opinion, the human act is not a necessary one, because it is not derived necessarily from human nature; but it proceeds of necessity, either from

In other words, there is *necessity of consequence* and not *of consequent* [108] as in a rigorous syllogism, in which one premise is contingent, the conclusion is contingent although it follows necessarily from the premises. The following is an example: Every virtuous man is truthful; now the Apostles were models of virtue; therefore the Apostles were truthful. The minor is contingent, for the Apostles *could* fail in their duty, Judas being a traitor. The conclusion is contingent, although it follows necessarily from the premises. The Apostles, while speaking the truth, were able not to do so; they affirmed it freely at the peril of their lives. There is, on the contrary, necessity of consequent, if the two premises of a syllogism are necessary, for instance: God is sovereign perfection; now sin is absolutely contrary to perfection; therefore God is impeccable. He not only does not sin, but He *cannot* sin. He is free only when it is a question of goodness.

We see that this classical distinction of the *sensus compositus*

concupiscence or from the divine motion. Cf. Billuart, *De Deo*, diss. VIII, a. 4, sec. 4; and a. 5.

In the Psychological Determinism of Leibniz, liberty is also reduced to *contingency* and *spontaneity*. The Church has condemned this doctrine, declaring heretical the Jansenistic proposition that: "For meritorious and unmeritorious acts in the state of fallen nature there is not required in man liberty from necessity, but liberty from coercion suffices." Denzinger, n. 1094. "Liberty from coercion" is merely the spontaneity which even the animals have.

On the other hand, Molinism defines human liberty as: "A faculty which, granted all the prerequisites for action, can act and not act even in the composite sense." It is of such a nature that, granted all that is required for the free act, even according to a simple priority of nature and not of time, liberty can still *de facto* not place the act *in sensu composito*. Actual resistance would be compatible with God's efficacious motion. How then can this latter still be called efficacious? As the Thomists remark, this definition of liberty is based upon a *petitio principii*, and we object to it precisely on account of the universal and transcendent super-eminence of divine causality. Cf. Billuart, *De Deo*, diss. VIII, a. 4, sec. 2 ad 6um; *De actibus humanis*, diss. II, a. 1, sec. 4, definition 5. See also Guillermin, *Revue thomiste*, 1902, p. 75, "De la grace suffisante."

[108] See Ia, q. 14, a. 13 ad 3um.

and *sensus divisus,* like that of necessity of consequence and of consequent, is not a subterfuge devised for the purpose of getting out of a difficulty. "It is simply," as Father Gardeil says,[109] "the verification of the non-contradiction of the system which pursues the logic of the exigencies of the absolutely first Being in all orders of things, causality included, in its application to the special terrain of liberty. It is the vigorous refusal to abandon a doctrine, approved in all branches of theological knowledge, because of a difficulty of detail. It is the affirmation of a mystery which is quite in order and which reappears every time there is question of reconciling the Infinite with the finite, as well in the order of existence as in that of operation. What would be strange is that the solution should be as simple as Molina[110] naïvely claimed, and that the agreement between free will and divine omnipotence should be definitely accounted for by a simple explanation which is based on the conception that good people have of God instead of being based on the philosophy of an Aristotle, a Plato, a St. Augustine, or a St. Thomas, which Molina claims to be explaining."

Molinism insists that it is in our power to choose only if we are masters of whatever conditions our choice; in this way we are masters of the final practical judgment. Now we are not masters of the predetermining divine decree nor of the divine motion, which condition our choice. Therefore, if Thomism is true, it is not in our power to choose. St. Thomas states this objection in Ia, q. 19, a. 8, obj. 3: "What is necessary by its antecedent cause is necessary absolutely. Now created things depend necessarily upon the divine will as upon their antecedent cause. Therefore all that God wills is absolutely necessary."

St. Thomas answers it as follows: "Consequents have necessity from their antecedents according to the mode of the antecedents.

[109] *Le donné révélé et la théologie,* p. 277.
[110] *Concordia,* on Ia, q. 23, a. 4, 5, disp. 1.

Hence things effected by the divine will have that kind of necessity that God wills them to have, either absolute or conditional. Not all things, therefore, are absolute necessities." *Item,* Ia, q. 105, a. 4 ad 2um and 3um.

In other words, for choice to be in our power we must be masters of what conditions our choice in the order of secondary causes. It is not necessary for us to be masters of the divine decree or of the divine motion, if this latter *causes in us and with us the free mode of our act.* Divine causality contains our own causality eminently, and God is more intimate to us than we are to ourselves. We should not conceive His motion as a *constraint* exerted externally by a created agent; it is entirely the interior causality of Him who creates and preserves us in being. The mystery in this case is not greater than that of creation, and is but the result of it. A person whom we love makes us *will freely* what he desires. Why could not God do so in a nobler, more certain, and very intimate manner that belongs to Him alone?

Even the best people are distrustful of the divine action, either denying or limiting it. The Thomist in his moments of difficulty forgets his own doctrine. We fear that we are no longer free if God becomes the complete *master* of us. We fail to understand that we are really *free* only in proportion as God dwells and reigns in us. Nevertheless we say every day: "Our Father who art in heaven, Thy *kingdom* come." It is even metaphysically true to say: To serve God is to reign. God alone can *grant* us to be truly *masters of ourselves,* of our passions, of the attraction of the goods of this world. This latter phrase comes naturally to the lips of every preacher regardless of the theological school to which he belongs. It is so simple that nobody would venture to deny it. It is the very doctrine of St. Thomas that gives this phrase its fullest meaning. This doctrine admits from the metaphysical point of view what the Christian admits from the moral point

of view. Has not morality its foundation in metaphysics, just as action has in being?

In the fullest sense it is true that *only the saint,* who has made a complete surrender of all autonomy to God, is perfectly free, because he is always in the *hands of God;* he possesses the holy liberty of the children of God. Intrinsically efficient grace, instead of forcing us, *makes us free* in the sense in which St. Thomas understands it (Ia, q. 83, a. 1 ad 3um). What human liberty was more perfect than that of Christ? Because of the fact He could not sin, we are sometimes inclined to think that He was not so free as we are. What a wretched presumption. Never was there a human liberty that was more voluntary under the influence of grace, that was *more master of itself* in proportion as it was impeccable. The will was essentially upright because it was the will of the Word made flesh, and because it was directed by the beatific vision. It could in no way be captivated by apparent goods; it maintained toward them an attitude of most absolute dominating indifference (IIIa, q. 15, a. 1; q. 18, a. 4). Is there anything sweeter than the infallibly efficacious grace of God? It diffuses itself gently in the soul that begins to will; the more this soul wills, the more it thirsts for God, the more it is overwhelmed by Him. The day when the Lord becomes most urgent in His demands, when He prefers the pure crystal to what was before sin, then He will give His grace in abundance in order that the soul may comply with His demands. It will be able to say to Him with St. Augustine: *"Lord, grant what Thou dost command, and command what Thou wilt."*

God is the first Being, and all modes of being depend upon Him. He is pure Act supremely determined, and therefore all determination depends upon Him. He is the first cause, and therefore all causality and all action depend upon Him. He is the first liberty, and therefore all determination of secondary liberty

depends upon Him.[111] He is omniscient, and His knowledge is the cause of everything external to Himself. He is omnipotent; how could He be *powerless* to convert a hardened sinner? Ought He then to await our choice so as to arrest the plan of His providence? In this case created liberties would be determining the definite order of the noblest part of creation. Liberalism may lend an ear to this doctrine. There is no teaching more opposed to that of St. Thomas, who completely defends the glorious and supreme dominion of God over all created things. "Not to us, O Lord, not to us: but to Thy name give glory" (Ps. 113: 1).

65) *Moral evil and the divine universal causality: (a) sufficient grace; (b) sin.*

There remains, however, a final objection. If the divine motion is required for man to determine himself, and if it is infallibly although freely followed by its effect, the sinner who actually does not will what is good, does not seem to have received *sufficient help* to do so, and moreover seems to be determined by God Himself to *will what is evil.* Thomism seemingly leads to the admission of the Jansenist thesis, namely: "Some of *God's precepts* are *impossible* of fulfilment for just men willing and attempting to fulfil them according to their present powers: they stand in need, too, of that grace by which they become possible" (Denzinger, n. 1092). The Council of Trent says, on the contrary, against the pseudo-Reformers: "God commands not impossibilities but, by commanding, both admonishes thee to do what thou art able, and to pray for what thou art not able to do" (Denzinger, n. 804). And it adds: *"For God forsakes not those who have been once justified by His grace, unless He be first forsaken by them"* (*ibid.*). God gives to all sufficient help to do the good that conscience dictates to us, and He forsakes the just man

[111] *Contra Gentes,* Bk. III, ch. lxxxix, n. 5.

only if He has been forsaken by him. See also Denzinger, n. 1296.

This same difficulty is stated by St. Paul in the Epistle to the Romans, 9: 19–24. After asking: "Is there injustice with God?" he replies: "God forbid, for He saith to Moses: I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy. And I will show mercy to whom I will show mercy." St. Paul adds: "Thou wilt say therefore to me: Why doth He then find fault? For who resisteth His will? O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it: Why hast thou made me thus? Or hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump, to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction, that He might shew the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy which He hath prepared unto glory?" Where is the injustice?[112]

St. Augustine in his *De correptione et gratia* (chs. v, vi, xi), in which he makes a special study of this question, answers likewise that God in His mercy gives to some the efficacious grace by means of which they are saved, and in justice refuses it to others, permitting them to be damned because of their culpable neglect. His judgments are incomprehensible. Man has it within his power to fail; but how could he entirely by his own efforts *cause* God's grace *to be efficacious?*

If Molinism is right, St. Paul and St. Augustine should have replied that versatile grace is given *indifferently* to all, and each one at will makes it efficacious or inefficacious by the consent of the will, and this consent depends only on the will. God places only some persons in *circumstances* in which He foresees that they will will what is good, and others in circumstances in which

[112] On this passage of St. Paul, see the commentary of St. Thomas on the Epistle to the Romans, ch. ix.

He foresees that they will will what is evil. But then God is no longer the first universal Cause of all things in existence, and *in the work of salvation the noblest part does not come from Him.*

Let us not forget that man, who of himself alone is incapable of doing what is good, *has it within his power to fail,* to sin.[118] Incapable of making divine grace *efficacious,* he can, through his own fault, make *void* the divine prevenient graces, and thus deserve that God refuse him the efficacious grace which would have saved him.

Evidently it was not God who urged Judas to betray Jesus. He merely permits the crime, though condemning it. He is not bound to prevent it. It is natural that what is defectible should sometimes fail, and the crime of Judas will be the means of bringing about a good which is greater than the salvation of the traitor. Can we say the wretched man did not receive sufficient help to avoid evil? Only the day before, Christ washed the traitor's feet; Judas, through his own fault, resisted the divine prevenient graces abundantly bestowed on him; the Lord was not the first to forsake him. At the last moment, Judas could have repented, if he had not doubted the divine mercy.

Neither did God urge Peter to deny Christ. St. Peter had received sufficient helps and warnings to avoid this fall. But he relied too much on his own strength; he learnt by experience that of himself alone he could do nothing but fall, and henceforth he placed all his trust in the grace of the Savior.

We see, according to St. Paul and St. Augustine, what must be

[118] The Second Council of Orange (canon 20) says, against the Semi-Pelagians: "God effects much good in man which is not of man's doing. But no good works are performed by man which God does not help him to perform." And canon 22 states: *"No one has of his own anything but lying and sin."* Denzinger, nn. 193, 195.

This does not mean that all the acts of infidels are sins, as the Jansenists maintained. For God co-operates in the natural order with infidels that they may perform naturally good acts, and He also gives actual graces to prompt them to be converted.

the answer to the objection that the sinner who actually does what is evil, does not receive sufficient help. What can theology add to this?

In fact, there is a mystery in this incomparably more profound than Molinism admits. It is the mystery of grace, the mystery of iniquity. The rôle of the theologian is to show, not its possibility or intrinsic non-repugnance, but only that we must admit its existence, and that it does not contain an evident contradiction. It will always remain obscure for us, because we have not an adequate knowledge of grace or of liberty. It is as though we were asked: "What exactly does a little more than 10 + 1 make?" Now let us see what St. Thomas teaches: (*A*) about the sufficiency of grace; (*B*) about the divine motion and sin.

A. Sufficient grace. The difficulty exists not only for the Thomists, but for all those who depart from Molinism and, like the Congruists, hold that, previous to the consent of our will, there is a difference between efficacious and sufficient grace. Six years after the appointment of the Congregations *De Auxiliis,* in December 1613, the General of the Jesuits, Father Aquaviva, in a decree which has become famous, ordered the theologians of the Society to teach Congruism, "which was explained and defended in the discussions of the Congregations *De Auxiliis* as being more in conformity with the teachings of St. Augustine and St. Thomas." [114]

This decree says: "Henceforth let our Fathers always teach that efficacious and sufficient grace do not differ merely *in actu secundo,* because the one obtains its effect by the co-operation of the free will and not the other; but that they differ also in *actu primo,* in this sense that, *scientia media* presupposed, God

[114] According to this same decree of Father Aquaviva, it is therefore this system and *not Molinism,* "which was explained and defended in the discussions of the Congregations *De Auxiliis* as being more in conformity with the teachings of St. Augustine and St. Thomas." This is of great significance.

with the fixed intention of producing good in us chooses Himself designedly those determinate means and employs them in the manner and at the moment at which He knows that the effect will be infallibly produced; so that, if He had foreseen the inefficacy of these means, God would have made use of other means. That is why, morally speaking, and considering it as a favor, there is something more in efficacious than in sufficient grace, even *in actu primo*. It is in this way that God causes us to perform the act, instead of merely giving us the grace by which we *can* act. The same kind of reasoning applies to perserverance, which undoubtedly is a gift of God."

Concerning this decree referred to by the Molinist, Father de Regnon, S.J.,[115] this latter remarks: "It is difficult to explain more precisely the opposition between Molinism and Congruism. . . . In Molinism God gives the grace which He *knows* to be efficacious; in Congruism God gives the grace *because He knows it to be efficacious.*"

But then the difficulty raised against Thomism reappears against Congruism. According to this system, how can we prove that souls who do not receive congruent grace, adapted to their character, have, nevertheless, sufficient help to do good and avoid evil? Does not God ask more of them than He gives?

St. Thomas (IIa IIae, q. 2, a. 5 objection 1) states this objection

[115] De Regnon, *Bannez et Molina*, p. 127. We know that the Molinists, in order to avoid being in direct opposition to the teaching of St. Thomas, call it Bannezianism. We have avoided the quotation of a single text from Bannez, which would, moreover, be quite useless, for there is an abundance of texts from the works of St. Thomas. See Del Prado, O.P., *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, 1907, Pars IIIa, ch. xi: *Utrum Bannezianismus sit vera comoedia a Molinistis inventa.* See also Billuart (*De gratia*, diss. V, a. 7, sec. 3), who shows how Molina (*Concordia*, q. 14, a. 13, disp. 26) recognized that St. Thomas himself (Ia, q. 105, a. 5) had taught the necessity of a motion which applies the secondary cause to act. It is directly against St. Thomas and not against Bannez that Molina wrote: "Candidly I confess that it is extremely difficult for me to understand *this motion and application which St. Thomas demands in secondary causes.*" The Jesuits of Coimbra (II, I, *Phys.*, ch. vii, q. 15) also recognize that St. Thomas taught physical premotion, and Capreolus after him, long before Bannez.

in all its force: Why punish man for his sin, if he has not received the necessary divine help for conversion? He replies: "Man is bound to do many things which can be accomplished only by the aid of grace, such as to believe with divine faith and to love God and one's neighbor in a supernatural way. Now the aid of grace is given to certain persons, and if it is not given to others that is because of a just judgment of previous sin or at least of original sin, as St. Augustine says (*De correptione et gratia,* chs. v, vi)."

But, they insist, this merely pushes the question further back and does not answer the question in respect to the first sin. To this St. Thomas replies that, if efficacious grace is not refused because of a previous sin, it is refused at least because of an accompanying defect. Apart from the first sin, the created liberty through its own defectibility resists sufficient graces, such as good inspirations or good advice, and thus puts an obstacle in the way of efficacious grace which was somehow offered in the sufficient help. Thus the fruit is promised in the flower, but if the hail falls upon a tree in bloom there will never be any fruit. This reply is developed by St. Thomas in the *Contra Gentes,* Bk. III, ch. clix. "But those alone are deprived of grace who place in themselves an obstacle to grace; thus he who shuts his eyes while the sun is shining is to be blamed if an accident occurs, although he is unable to see unless the light of the sun enable him to do so. . . . It is said of sinners (Job 21:14): 'They have said to God: Depart from us. We desire not the knowledge of Thy ways. . . . They have been rebellious to the light' (Job 24:13)." *Contra Gentes,* Bk. III, ch. clx.

The holy doctor states his mind more clearly in the following chapter: "He who has never sinned and still retains his state of innocence, has it in his power not to place an obstacle to grace. But the sinner is no longer free so that he can avoid placing *every*

obstacle to grace; he can, indeed, by his own power, for a certain time avoid sin (for it is not necessary for him always to sin), but if he be left to himself for long, he will fall into sin, and he will thus place a new obstacle to grace." [116]

"The free will," says St. Augustine,[117] "is self-sufficient for evil, but it is effective of no good unless it be aided by omnipotent Goodness." "Without me you can do nothing," says the Lord (John 15:5). "The first cause of the defect of grace and of the presence of sin, is on our part," remarks St. Thomas; [118] "but the first cause of the bestowal of grace is on God's, according to Osee (13:9): Destruction is thy own, O Israel, thy help is only in me."

Molinism comes again with the objection: Why claim that efficacious grace is refused when the first sin is committed, because of an accompanying defect or resistance? Quite to the contrary, the reason of this resistance, it seems, is because efficacious grace is refused. Resistance, far from preceding the refusal of efficacious grace, follows it. Hence the sinner is not responsible.

According to St. Thomas, it is not necessary that man's failure precede the refusal of grace according to a priority of time; a *priority of nature* suffices. It is an application of the general principle which, among other questions, throws light upon the question of the justification of the ungodly (Ia IIae, q. 113, a. 8, ad 1um). This principle is that of the mutual relation of causes to one another: "Causes mutually interact though in a different order." It is enunciated by Aristotle in his *Metaphysics* (Bk. IV, ch. xi), and we have already explained (n. 61, *A*) how it enables us to understand that, at the end of deliberation, the choice of the will precedes the final practical judgment in the order of efficient causality, although following it in the order of formal causality.

[116] See also St. Thomas, *De malo*, q. 3, a. 1 ad 8um; on II Sent., d. 37, q. 2; see Ia IIae, q. 109, a. 6–10; on Epistle to the Hebrews, ch. xii, lect. 2.

[117] *De correptione et gratia*, ch. xi.

[118] See Ia IIae, q. 112, a. 3 ad 2um.

Thus the artist *by his action* makes use of his *idea* as directive *of his action*. Thus, too, the bird holds out its wings, and the wings hold up the bird.

St. Thomas appeals to this general principle in explaining how, in the justification of the ungodly, which takes place instantaneously, the remission of sin is the result of the infusion of grace, although on the part of the sinner the deliverance from sin precedes, according to a priority of nature, the reception of grace. "The subject moved loses the quality that it had before acquiring a new one, whereas the agent in giving it this new quality acts for the removal of the other, which disappears. Thus the sun by its light acts for the removal of darkness, and hence on the part of the sun, illumination is prior to the removal of darkness; but on the part of the atmosphere to be illuminated, to be freed from darkness is, in the order of nature, prior to being illuminated, although both are simultaneous in time. And since the infusion of grace and the remission of sin regard God who justifies, hence in the order of nature the infusion of grace is prior to the freeing from sin. But on the part of the man justified, the being freed from sin is prior to the obtaining of justifying grace." [119]

The Pelagian idea of justification was entirely a material one when it affirmed that it is because man prepares himself for grace that he receives it; he merits it by his naturally good works.

If justification is explained by the principle of the mutual relation of causes to one another, then it must be the same for the loss of grace which is the reverse process of conversion. Immediately that man falls into mortal sin and loses habitual grace, *his failure,* in the order of material causality, *precedes the refusal that God extends to him of actual efficacious* grace and is the reason for this failure.[120] In another order of causality, however,

[119] St. Thomas, Ia IIae, q. 113, a. 8 ad 1um.

[120] On this point John of St. Thomas (on Ia, q. 19, disp. 5, a. 6, n. 61) says:

this failure presupposes the divine permission of sin and the absence of efficacious grace, without which there would be no sin. Thus final perseverance is a gratuitous gift to the predestined (Council of Trent, Sess. VI, ch. xiii). But in opposition to justification, sin as such is the work of the deficient creature, and not the work of God. It is, then, true to say *purely and simply* that sin precedes the refusal of the efficacious grace which God offers us. In other words, God does not forsake the just unless He is forsaken by them, as the Council of Trent says (Sess. VI, ch. xi). "We are deprived of grace," remarks St. Thomas, "only if we have been unwilling to receive it. God, in fact, can will only the good, and it is but right that, if anyone does not wish or neglects to prepare himself for grace, he should be deprived of it." [121]

"Guilt at least accompanies and in *some order of causality, at least material,* precedes the refusal of the help, and this suffices for saying that man voluntarily puts an obstacle to God's operation even with regard to the first refusal of efficacious help. For truly, *when efficacious help is refused to a man,* as far as the man is concerned there is *sin or inadvertence,* and each is voluntary, and thus there is concomitantly a voluntary obstacle.

"But that there is also previous culpability according to some kind of causality is evident, because for whatever sin there is required the permissive will of God and there follows defect on the part of man, or a slipping through his own frailty, which leads to nothingness and defect, just as by the absence of the sun the sky becomes by its very nature dark.

"And when it is said that our defect as a disposing and material cause precedes the refusal of help, this does not mean that it precedes by way of previous disposition, as remote dispositions precede the form, as heat or dryness, for instance, precedes fire, but after the manner that the corruption of one form and generation of another precede each other. For corruption is, as it were, a disposition preceding the introduction of the form, as we showed in Book I (q. 1, 2, *De generatione*), because it is only in a subject without form that the opposite is introduced, although formally or effectively generation is prior to corruption. Thus the refusal of help is only in the deficient subject, not before the deficiency; and yet the defect follows upon the refusal of help. *In that priority, therefore, of material and disposing cause, the defect which accompanies the refusal of help is the cause and reason why God forsakes us,* because, namely we freely put an obstacle in the way, concomitant with God's abandonment of us." Cf. St. Thomas, on Epistle to the Hebrews, ch. xii, lect. 3; and *Contra Gentes,* III, ch. clix. See also *infra,* n. 65, *B.*

[121] St. Thomas, on I Sent., dist. 40, q. 4, a. 2 ad 3um. Cf. *De veritate,* q. 24, a. 14 ad 2um; on II Sent., dist. 37, a. 2; *De malo,* q. 1, a. 4; q. 3, a. 1.

Without God's permission of sin and the absence of efficacious grace, there would be no sin; but this permission and this absence of grace are not the cause of sin; its cause is due solely to our own frailty. Action follows being; of ourselves we are nothing and return to nothing; consequently our action suffices in itself for us to fail; this failure is the result of our own frailty, which God is not bound to remedy. *He often remedies the defect, but not always. That is a mystery.*

What then is sufficient grace, according to the teaching of St. Thomas and the Thomists? It is a grace which, as being the motive of our choice, gives *the proximate power to act; it does not give the action.* Only efficacious grace moves us effectively to action.[122]

Among *sufficient graces* we must include: (1) external helps, such as the preaching of the Gospel, good example and good advice, miracles, salutary humiliations, favors, the providential disposal of the circumstances in our life: (2) among interior graces: habitual grace, the infused supernatural virtues (such as faith, hope, and charity), which give us the habitual proximate power to act in a supernatural way; (3) transitory actual graces, prevenient and inspiring, which produce in us indeliberate movements of the will, pious emotions, and good aspirations, which incline us to make a salutary choice. Remote sufficient grace disposes

[122] See Ia IIae, q. 109, a. 1, 2, 9, 10; q. 113, a. 7, 10; *Contra Gentes,* Bk. III, chs. lxxxviii, lxxxix, clix. *In his commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians* he says: "God gives the *power* to act by infusing virtue and grace by which man is made *capable and apt* for operation. But He confers the *same operation* inasmuch as He operates in us, *interiorly* moving and urging us to good. And it is therefore in this sense that the Apostle says with regard to the former: *'I am made a minister.'* With regard to the latter he says: *'According to the operation of His power,'* inasmuch as His power worketh in us *'both to will and to accomplish according to His good will.'"* St. Thomas uses the expression *"sufficient help"* in Ia IIae, q. 106, a. 2 ad 2um.

It is a common saying with the Thomists that: "Sufficient grace gives the *possibility* to do good if we will, but efficacious grace makes us *will* it." St. Augustine called sufficient grace *a help without which we do not do good,* and efficient grace *a help by which* we do good.

us at least to pray for the power to overcome temptation and do good. Proximate sufficient grace disposes us immediately to perform a deliberate salutary act, without, however, making us do it effectively.

Like the *motive,* it gives only the power to act. Now the motive which decides us to act seems to us so sufficient that Leibniz thought it caused us infallibly to act, according to a moral necessity. Why should sufficient grace not be really sufficient? (Cf. *supra,* n. 61, *B.*)

It is certain that inefficacious grace, such as conceived by the Jansenists, does not suffice; they called it a little grace. According to Jansenius, indeed, Molinism expresses the truth for the state of innocence. Before original sin man received only sufficient graces, and it depended only on his will to make them efficacious. But since original sin, the free will, which has been wounded and corrupted, can no longer accomplish the good without an efficacious grace. It is solely due to this weakness of our will that efficacious grace is required, according to Jansenius, and without it we have not the power to do good. It confers not only the act, but even the power to act. If celestial delectation is inferior to terrestrial, the scales necessarily incline toward evil. Man with little graces is *incapable* of overcoming his covetousness, just as the blind man is incapable of seeing the light of the sun. It is only by efficacious grace that the power to do good is given along with the action itself.

On the other hand, sufficient grace, in the Molinist sense, cannot be reconciled with the principle of the divine universal causality, since it would depend entirely upon ourselves to make this grace efficacious by our consent. Our will would not be moved by God to determine itself. Molinism, as a matter of fact, restricts the merciful action of God since, according to this system, God would be giving us only sufficient graces, leaving it to us to make them efficacious.

We must therefore admit sufficient grace in the Thomist sense. It is truly *sufficient* in itself; it gives us the power to act, although efficacious grace is required in another order, so that we may act effectively. Wherever we find several causes concurring in an effect, have we not this same fact of causes sufficient in themselves, which however do not result in becoming effective each by itself? The good which attracts us is *sufficient* in the order of finality. We usually say that the flower *suffices* for producing the fruit, yet for the fruit to be produced, the flower must not be destroyed by hail and must not be deprived of sunlight. Bread *suffices* for my sustenance, yet it must be digested; intelligence *suffices* for knowing the principal natural virtues, yet there must be application of the intellect; the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ *suffices* for the salvation of all men, yet we must allow its merits to be applied to us.[123]

The most rigid Thomists [124] say that sufficient grace is so truly sufficient that, if the salutary act is not forthcoming, that is not due to the insufficiency of the divine help, but to the failure of the free will which in itself is sufficient for this failure. A failure requires but a defective cause. So speaks the Council of Trent (Sess. VI, ch. xiii): "God, unless men be themselves wanting to His grace, as He has begun the good work, so will He perfect it, *working* (in them) *to will and to accomplish.*" (Denzinger, n. 806.)

Sufficient grace in the Thomist sense is neither something useless and sterile nor, a fortiori, something harmful. The good grain committed to the earth is not sterile; it will bear its fruit if the impoverishment of the soil does not resist it. Thus sufficient grace is of itself very useful and becomes accidentally useless, on account of our failure which is not to be attributed to it. Habitual grace and all supernatural virtues are incomparably precious and

[123] St. Thomas, Ia IIae, q. 109, a. 1; IIIa, q. 61, a. 1 ad 3um.

[124] Lemos, *Panoplia*, Vol. IV, Bk. IV, p. 2, tr. III, ch. ii. Alvares, *De auxiliis*, Bk. XI, disp. 113, n. 10.

supremely useful for salvation, although actual efficacious grace is also required so that we may make use of them.

To hold that merely sufficient grace is harmful because it makes man responsible for his sin, would oblige us to maintain that reason itself is harmful and that it would be better to be deprived of it, like the animals that cannot sin.

Just as it is in man's power not to yield to the sufficient and reasonable motive for good behavior, *so he can resist sufficient grace, and thus deprive himself of efficacious grace* which would have been given him had he not resisted, *and which was offered to him in sufficient grace,* just as the act is included in the power, the fruit in the flower.

We see that this serious problem of the sufficiency of the divine help given to all men is solved by the general principle which is the dominating element in all Thomistic doctrine. It is the principle that *being is divided into potency and act.* All the great problems of being, of knowledge, of action, are clarified by the light of this principle which constitutes the very essence of the whole philosophy of Aristotle and of the natural metaphysics of the human intellect.[125]

Those who do not admit a real distinction of potency and act

[125] To get at the root of the problem of *sufficient grace* or of the *proximate power,* we should have to grasp fully the meaning of the Aristotelian notion of *potency.* We should see that, from the metaphysical point of view, the error of the Jansenists harks back to that of the *Megarians,* disciples of Parmenides, who were refuted by Aristotle at the end of the ninth book of the *Metaphysics.* These philosophers, who were *Determinists,* maintained that *potency does not exist previous to act,* but only together with act. Hence it would follow that the architect has the power to build only when he does so. Similarly, the Jansenists maintained that *there is a proximate power to do good only when one actually does so.* It is the negation of potency, which is affirmed by common sense and philosophic reason.

On the other hand, Molinism scarcely differs from the *Indeterminism of Heraclitus* which denied determination or act, and maintained that everything was possible, not being concerned with the principles of contradiction and causality. Molinism affirms that the secondary cause passes *de facto* to act without being moved by the first cause, as if act were nothing more than potency, as if determination could come from indetermination.

in the order of being between created essence and its existence, are naturally inclined not to admit it in the order of operation between the potency to act and the action itself, between sufficient and efficacious grace. If, on the contrary, the creature does not exist of itself, neither can it act of itself alone. It is dependent on God both in its being and in its action.

It has been said that the Thomist must abandon his doctrine when he enters his oratory.[126] On the contrary, it is during his

[126] De Regnon, S.J. (*Bannez et Molina*, p. 162) says: "Be convinced then of this that, however firm Thomists you may be in the enclosure of your schools, everywhere else, in the pulpit, in the confessional, in your oratory, you are with us, you are with all Christian people, humble Molinists."

Were St. Augustine and St. Thomas, in their hours of prayer and adoration, "humble Molinists"? Humility does not consist in diminishing God's glory or His supremacy, but in recognizing our nothingness before Him.

A theologian who was wont to deduce practical conclusions from the most speculative of theses, has pointed out what the prayer of the Molinist should be, if his piety and humility were not the means of correcting his doctrine. It is as follows: "Lord, I give Thee thanks, because when Thou dost stand at the door of my heart, as at the door of the hearts of other men where Thou dost knock perhaps harder than at mine, I alone however without Thee, open the door of my heart that Thou mayst enter with Thy grace to justify me; the rest of men, unwilling to open to Thee, are unjust and extortioners; in the affair of my salvation not all is from Thee. I give Thee thanks because, since I am already justified, even by my own free will I distinguish myself from other just men who, agitated by the same temptation as I had, and given equally the same help as I had, and perhaps more, they fell into temptation, and standing refused to fall. . . . I was able and willed to persevere in the grace of justification, and others did not persevere. I give Thee thanks because, on account of these foreseen merits in me, in preference to others Thou hast chosen and predestined me for Thy glory." Del Prado, *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, Pars IIIa, p. 149.

Prayer, preaching, and the direction of souls, the more elevated and supernatural they become, the more they use the very terms of the two great doctors of grace, St. Thomas and St. Augustine. The Molinist in his hours of intense prayer, forgets his doctrine and says with the Scripture: "Have mercy on me, O God. Create a clean heart in me, O God, and renew a right spirit within my bowels. Convert me, O Lord, to thee and I shall be converted." There is no sin committed by another that we could not commit on account of our own frailty; if we have not fallen, if we have persevered, it is undoubtedly because we have labored and struggled; but without God we should have done nothing; and when, with and by His grace, we have acted, we must still say in all truth: "We are unprofitable servants. Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to Thy name give glory."

moments of insubordination and pride that he forgets his doctrine of the subordination of causes. Freed from all illusion, he must say that of himself he is nothing. The Apostle Peter who at first relied somewhat on his own strength, realized his weakness and he learned to put all his trust in God's grace. It would be a great illusion to think that *what is better in us and of a salutary nature,* the good use of our liberty and of grace, our free determination, *is exclusively our work and does not come from God.* How could St. Paul have said: *By the grace of God I am what I am,* that it is by God's grace and not my feeble powers that I am what I am? How could any Christian soul say sincerely, that *of itself* it is nothing?

This soul, questioned concerning the reconciliation of the efficacy of grace with free will, often will not know how to express itself. But if it happens to answer in the Molinist sense, this is because it is unable to find words to express its most profound thought. In truth, when the Molinist prays he thinks like us that it is an old and absurd dream to believe that we are or do something good of ourselves and independently of God. What is the prayer of the publican? Of ourselves we are nothing. If we deduct from ourselves what we have received from God and what He unceasingly preserves in us, in strictness of terminology, without any metaphor, there is nothing left. The sun's ray illumines only because of the light imparted to it by the sun; left to itself it returns to darkness. Thus of ourselves we return to nothingness. "What have you which you have not received?" asks St. Paul. How can our free determination be *exclusively our act?* How can it depend solely upon ourselves that the grace of God is made either efficacious or sterile? Of ourselves we are less than nothing, for our defectibility tends to make us fail, and sin is less than even nothing, like error when there is no consideration: "Not that we are sufficient to think anything of ourselves, as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God." (II Cor. 3:5.)

B) The divine motion and sin. Granted that all receive sufficient grace, there remains one more difficulty. How can we claim that God *can move one to the sinful act itself,* viewed as a physical entity? Would He not be the cause of sin, and then what would we have to say of God's sanctity? God, who loves His divine goodness above all things, can in no way will sin, which turns us away from the sovereign Good. The sinner can will what is sinful, because of the pleasure he finds in it. God can in no way will that we should turn away from Him. In Himself He cannot will even physical evil or that of punishment, but only accidentally, as the result of a good to be preferred to that of which physical evil is the privation. He wills accidentally the death of the antelope that the lion may live, and the punishment inflicted on the sinner for his salutary correction and as a manifestation of His own justice. As for the evil of sin, He cannot will it at all; but He merely permits it, for it is natural that what is defectible should sometimes fail. God is not bound to remedy this failure; He permits it, on the contrary, for the purpose of manifesting His mercy and justice (Ia, q. 19, a. 9; q. 23, a. 3; Ia IIae, q. 79, a. 1).[127]

It is no less true, as St. Thomas says (Ia IIae, q. 79, a. 2), that: "the act of sin is both a being and an act; and in both respects it is from God. Every being, whatever the mode of its being, must be derived from the First Being. Every action is caused by something existing in act, since nothing produces an action save in so far as it is in act: and every being in act is reduced to the First Act (God) as to its cause, who is act by His essence. Therefore God is the cause of every action in so far as it is an action. But sin denotes a being and an action with a defect. *This defect is from a created defectible cause* (free will), as falling away from

[127] The expression *"God permits evil"* is elliptical. Clearly it does not mean that God authorizes evil; but *He allows evil to happen.* St. Thomas often says (v. g., IIIa, q. 1, a. 3 ad 3um): *"God allows evil to happen in order to bring a greater good therefrom."* God, though disapproving it, *allows evil to happen,* in view of a greater good.

the order of the First Agent (God). This defect is not attributed to God as its cause, but to free will: even as the defect of limping it attributed to a crooked leg as its cause, but not to the motive power which nevertheless causes whatever movement there is in the limping. Accordingly God is the cause of the *act* of sin, but He is not the cause of *sin*, because He does not cause the act to have a defect." St. Augustine says the same in the *City of God* (Bk. XII, ch. vii).[128]

St. Thomas brings forward this objection: There are acts which are essentially bad, such as blasphemy and hatred of God; and God cannot be the cause of their physical entity without being the cause of their moral deformity.

The holy Doctor replies as follows: "These acts do not take their species from the privation itself, wherein consists the nature of evil, but from some object to which that privation is united" (Ia IIae, q. 79, a. 2 ad 3um). In the *De malo* (q. 3, a. 2 ad 2um), he adds: "The deformity of sin is derived from the specification of this act, not in so far as the act is physical, for as such it is caused by God; but in so far as the act is moral, it is to be attributed solely to the free will." The physical or intellectual energy which is expended in the act of sin is not itself bad.

But Molinism insists upon asking how God can move the will to this determinate act rather than to a certain other, without being the cause of its malice?

If it were entirely God's action, as when He gives operating grace which produces the first movemnt of the will,[129] the ob-

[128] "Let no one seek for the efficient cause of an evil will; for it is not *efficient*, but *deficient;* neither is it an *effect*, but a *defect*."

[129] Cf. St. Thomas, Ia IIae, q. 111, a. 2: "In that effect in which *our mind is moved and does not move, but in which God is the sole mover*, the operation is attributed to God, and it is with reference to this that we speak of *operating grace*. In that effect in which our mind both moves and is moved, the operation is not only attributed to God, but also to the soul; and it is with reference to this that we speak of *co-operating grace*." Cf. Ia IIae, q. 9, a. 6 ad 3um.

jection would be impossible of solution;[130] but He moves the will to determine itself, and it is in this determination that the defect is realized. For a better understanding of this, we must call to mind that the divine motion inclines the will first of all toward its adequate object, which is universal good, and only after that toward an inadequate object, which is a certain particular good. In the first kind of good the divine motion constitutes the *free mode* of the act; it operates interiorly in the very depths of the will taken in its widest extent and, so to say, directs it through all the degrees of good, the proffered efficacious grace included. And it is only after a *voluntary inadvertence* to our duty[131] that our will, through its defection, is inclined toward a certain particular good which is contrary to God's law, and it is then that God moves it to the physical act of sin.

This voluntary inconsideration precedes the culpable choice according to a priority of nature, if not of time. The will, which is naturally inclined to good and not to evil, does not tend and is not straightway drawn to evil; it inclines to an apparent good only after turning away from true goods. Therefore when God moves it to the physical act of sin, it has already virtually refused the grace offered to it.[132]

[130] Thus it is that St. Thomas teaches that the devil could not sin at the first moment of his creation, for his first act came from God, and he had not as yet determined himself under the influence of the divine motion. Ia, q. 63, a. 5.

[131] St. Thomas (Ia, q. 63, a. 1 ad 4um) investigates how a first sin is committed when there is no previous bad inclination. It is the case of sin in the angels. He replies that this sin presupposes merely the absence of consideration of that which should be considered: "Such a sin does not presuppose ignorance, *but merely the absence of consideration of the things which ought to be considered.* In this way the angel sinned, by seeking his own good, of his own free will, insubordinately to the rule of the divine will."

[132] Billuart (*De angelis,* diss. V, a. 1) thus sums up the general teaching of the Thomists: "This want of consideration is a part of sin. For the intellectual creature sins *in the first place* by not considering what can and should be considered; the sin is *completed* when, through want of consideration on the part of the intellect, the will moves itself to perform the act. But this want of consideration is *interpretatively voluntary,* in that the intellect, proposing the object

This is what the Thomists explain especially with regard to the sin of the angels, which was preceded by no other.[133] They point out that for every act of the will two motions are required. The one, which presents an object, is objective; the other, which inclines the will toward this object, is subjective. For the good act these two motions come from God. For the bad act, the objective motion, which proposes an apparent good mingled with evil, is not from God as to what there is defective about it; this comes either from bad advice given or from our own cupidity. The presence of this objective and defective motion produces in the soul of anybody about to sin a voluntary lack of consideration for his duty, and only then does the divine influence, which is the cause of the physical reality of the sinful act and not of its malice, make itself felt.[134]

without taking the rule into due consideration, whilst the will applies itself to act, is drawn to will at least interpretatively this want of consideration. And thus there is integrally one sin resulting from this want of consideration indirectly and interpretatively voluntary and from the bad choice expressly and directly voluntary; just as in all cases there is integrally one sin resulting from the defect of reason in directing and of the will in choosing." By the interpretative or indirect voluntary is meant here the *virtual voluntary*, as Billuart says further on (diss. V, a. 3, *dico* 4).

[133] On Ia, q. 63, a. 1, 5, cf. Cajetan, Bannez, John of Saint Thomas, Salmanticenses, Gonet, Billuart. Consult these same commentators on Ia IIae, q. 79, a. 1, 2. *Whether God is the cause of sin. Whether the act of sin is from God;* and *De malo*, q. 3, a. 1, 2. Cf. especially John of St. Thomas, on Ia, q. 19, disp. 5, a. 6, *"Solvitur argumentum ex influxu Dei in materiale peccati,"* nn. 65–70; also Billuart, *De Deo*, diss. V, a. 5.

[134] John of St. Thomas (on Ia, q. 19, disp. 5, a. 6, n. 67) writes as follows: "The proposal of the object and the moral motion to the act of sin, because it is defective and consequent upon the defect, originates from a deficient cause . . . although what entity there is in such motion and proposal is entirely from God; but at the same time we distinguish between the moral mode of the motion, and the causation of the entity as an entity. *Such* ▪ *moral motion being admitted, resulting from a lack* of consideration and a defect, the causality and influence of God begins to be exerted on the will, upon what is *effective*, not *defective*, in that God operates as first cause and first being, and thus whatever He accomplishes pertains to being and effect and not to defect because a being, inasmuch as it is defective, is non-existent." How does the will pass from an already guilty complacency to the bad choice? St. Thomas explains this in Ia IIae, q. 77, a. 2, c, and ad 3um.

Hence the divine motion does not surprise the innocent man, who would find himself poised between good and evil, so as to incline him to evil. *God never determines to the material act of sin unless the creature has already determined itself to what formally constitutes sin.*[135] He moves the wills according to their dispositions; consequently He moves to the physical act of sin only the will already badly disposed and demanding, so to speak, to be thus moved. Let us take a sin in which the responsibility is quite evident, a sin of malice, such as that of Judas. He disposes himself for it and takes pleasure in it beforehand. The Lord says to him afterwards: "That which thou dost, do quickly" (John 13:27). The Lord neither ordains, nor advises, but permits the accomplishment of the premeditated crime,[136] although He must permit this evil while disapproving of it. Before sinning, the sinner himself refuses the light and grace coming to him from God. "They have said to God: Depart from us. We desire not the knowledge of thy ways" (Job 21:14). "They have been rebellious to the light" (Job 24:13). It is also said of the sinner in the Psalms: "He would not understand that he might do well" (Ps. 35:4).

Conclusion. Such is the solution of the principal difficulties presented by the doctrine of St. Thomas. If things still remain obscure and mysterious, we are inclined to think that in all this there is no contradiction, for it is by a rigorous process of reasoning that St. Thomas advances from the known to the unknown.

1) He starts from the fundamental truths in the order of in-

[135] Billuart, *De Deo,* diss. VIII, a. 5, ad obj. 3: "God never determines one to the material element in sin unless the creature previously in some way has determined itself to the formal element in sin. For God, who foresees all things, moves each thing according to its exigency and disposition; consequently He moves to the bad action only the will which is of itself badly disposed and demands to be so moved.

On the contrary, Calvin is induced by his principles to make God the author of sin, because according to his doctrine the divine motion, instead of producing in us and with us the free mode of our act, is something necessitating.

[136] Cf. St. Thomas, *in Evang. Joan.,* ch. xiii, lect. 5.

vention, from the first principles of reason and of being: the principle of identity or of contradiction, the principle of causality; *everything that passes from potentiality to act is set in motion by a being in act, and in the first place by the Being who is pure Act.* It is on this principle that the proofs for the existence of God are based. Why should human liberty be an exception to this fundamental law of being and of action?

2) In the order of the ultimate reasons of things (*in via judicii*), St. Thomas starts from this supreme truth, that God is His being and His action. From this are deduced the absolute exigencies of the divine nature, especially the principle of *the universal causality of the first agent.* Why should the determination of human liberty be an exception to this principle?

3) Finally, from the supernatural point of view of faith, St. Thomas as a theologian starts from this first of revealed principles, that *God is the first cause of our salvation. "Without Me you can do nothing,"* said the Lord (John 15:5). Hence the necessity of prayer to implore the help of Him who converts the wills and without whose grace they are not converted. What is of main importance in the work of salvation is our free choice of the good. How could this be exclusively our own and not come from God, the Author of salvation? *"It is God,"* says St. Paul, *"who worketh in you both to will and to accomplish"* (Phil. 2:13).

As an eminent theologian [137] says: "The Church in her liturgy, the saints, mystical writers, all Christian people, do not ask merely to be enlightened as to their duties by illuminations of the intellect, to be aroused to action by good impressions and impulses of the will. What disturbs them more than anything else is the frailty, the inconstancy, the caprice, the sluggishness of their own free will; and they beg God to stabilize and direct the activity of their will. Can we believe that St. Paul was awaiting the outcome of the struggle with a determination springing from his free will

[137] Guillermin, *Revue thomiste,* 1902, p. 75: "De la grace suffisante."

alone, when he boldly proclaimed (Rom. 8:35): *'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?* Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or the sword? . . . *But in all these things we overcome, because of Him that hath loved us.* For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities . . . nor any creature *shall be able* to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.' And let us recall these other words (II Cor. 12:9): 'The Lord said to me: *My grace is sufficient for thee, for power is made perfect in infirmity.* Gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may dwell in me. . . . For when I am weak then am I powerful.' Certainly he knew that he could lose this grace, resist it, and so doing even render it vain and useless. But when he enumerated the marvelous results which he hoped for with so much assurance, certainly he did not suppose *their positive realization* depended *ultimately* on his own will, which would have to decide everything *by itself, and not through the efficacy of grace.*" [138]

Such are the first rational and revealed principles in the light of which St. Thomas examines the question of the relations of God to human action. There are and must be obscurities in his solution of them; but nothing justifies us in saying that it implies a contradiction, since it results from these very first principles and since

[138] On this point Billuart (*De Deo*, diss. VIII, a. 5, *in fine*) says: "Whether grace *per se* efficacious in the order of salvation ought to be explained by *physical predetermination*, and *whether this predetermination ought to be extended* to natural acts and *to the material element in sin*, these two questions are *merely philosophical* and incidental to the main dogma of grace *per se* efficacious. . . . But *grace per se efficacious* independently of the consent of the creature and of middle knowledge, we defend as a *theological dogma which is connected with the principles of faith and which is approximately definable.* And so almost all the otner Schools are with us, if we except the Molinist. The adversaries, however, attempt to confuse these two philosophical questions with the dogma of efficacious grace, in order that by this means they may make God to be the author of sin and thus render Him hateful to the common people and simple-minded women."

it is by these principles that the Thomist synthesis has established its proofs on all points of theological knowledge.

Molinism is not a general synthesis and is not philosophical; nor is it a theological system, but merely an opinion in a particular controversy;[139] and in its manner of development it is entirely opposed to the teaching of St. Thomas. Instead of starting with necessary and universal principles, so as to go from the known to the unknown, it starts with a difficulty which has to be solved: how to reconcile God's foreknowledge with human freedom. And the solution is based entirely on a *definition of human freedom which cannot be proved, either by experience or a priori, and which is nothing else but a begging of the question.*[140] This definition must lead Molinism to deny the absolute universality and necessity of the first principles of reason and theology, without succeeding in safeguarding liberty, which is destroyed by the determinism of the circumstances implied in the *scientia media.* (Cf. *supra,* n. 49, *b.*)

"Certainly," writes Father Guillermin,[141] "philosophic reason must not ignore the very many divergences and inequalities which distinguish the numerous degrees of created being. But it is absolutely imperative for reason to bring back all things to unity, to rediscover, synthesize, and unify all things in one infinitely simple

[139] Cf. Gardeil, *Le Donné révélé et la science théologique* (*Les systèmes théologiques*), p. 274.

[140] *Conscience* perceives only one thing, that we are the *immediate principle of our free determinations.* It does not attest that we are the first principle *independently of God.* On this latter point conscience can vouch for nothing. It no more perceives either the presence or the absence of the divine motion, than it does the presence or the absence of the preservative act by which God communicates existence to us incessantly.

As for *reason,* it affirms that the activity of every secondary cause, whatever it may be, depends upon the first cause, and every *secondary liberty* on the *first liberty;* for our liberty could not have all the perfection and independence of God's liberty, between which and itself there can be only an *analogical similarity.*

[141] *Revue thomiste,* 1902, p. 75.

and infinitely comprehensive first principle. Now Molinism goes right against this indestructible instinct of our reason. It brings into the relations between God and the world a sort of transcendental dualism which nothing justifies. . . . The Molinists affirm that it is of the essence of a free act that its immediate cause, the created will, does not *depend* on any higher influences as to the *determination* of its choice. That is an affirmation which, according to our opinion, rests upon a *begging of the question,* and we protest against it on the score of the universal and transcendental supereminence of divine causality."

Finally, how can we maintain that, as faith teaches us, God is the first cause, if He produces in us only good movements, good aspirations? "It is not he who has good aspirations who will enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he who, by a free act, does the will of the heavenly Father." *How is God still the first cause of our salvation,* "If He only takes a part and not the most important part in the work . . . *if He remains a stranger to the determination of the free will, in which is completed and concentrated the whole work of salvation"?* [142] The conversion of St. Paul, of Magdalen, of the good thief, every true conversion is in the first place the work of God in the soul drawing it to Himself. Our faith, our reason, and our heart beseech God, the Author of all good, who began the work of our salvation, that He Himself complete it. *"He who hath begun a good work in you, will perfect it"* (Phil. 1:6). "God, unless men be themselves wanting to His grace, as He has begun the good work, so will He perfect it, working in them to will and accomplish," says the Council of Trent (Denzinger, n. 806). Holy Scripture unceasingly proclaims it: "But the salvation of the just is from the Lord" (Ps. 36:39). "By the grace of God I am what I am" (I Cor. 15:10). "The grace of God life everlasting" (Rom. 6:23). "For of Him and by Him and in Him are all things" (Rom. 11:36). "What hast thou that thou hast not re-

[142] *Ibid.,* p. 71.

ceived?" (I Cor. 4:7). "It is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy" (Rom. 9:16). "Who worketh in you, both to will and to accomplish" (Phil. 2:13). "Who worketh all in all" (I Cor. 12:6). "For in Him we live and move and are" (Acts 17:28).

The Council of Orange insists on these texts.[143] And does not the Council of Trent define that the grace of final perseverance is a free gift, as predestination is? [144] Why is it that one sinner is converted a few moments before death, whereas another dies suddenly in a state of sin? It is the mystery of the divine predilections for which there is no extrinsic reason.

How could this teaching of faith, such as St. Thomas interprets it, incline us to quietism, as some have claimed? Certainly it bids us not to disturb ourselves, to be recollected and attentive to the operation of grace in us, but it does not dispense us from endeavoring, under the influence of the grace given us, to struggle and be victorious. It does not tell us to wait for a *sign* of divine assistance; on the contrary, it incites us to pray that we may be ready to act as soon as our conscience bids us or obliges us to do so. God moves us, St. Augustine repeatedly says, not that we should do nothing, but precisely that we should act. And often, *if we demand too little from ourselves, it is because we do not count sufficiently on the grace* which God has promised and wishes to give us in order to have us fulfil His precepts. *If the level of our spiritual life becomes lowered,* and if we are satisfied with leading an entirely

[143] "God works many good things in man, that man does not work; but man works no good deeds that God does not give him the strength to do." Denzinger, n. 193.

[144] "If anyone saith that a man who is born again and justified is bound of faith to believe that he is assuredly in the number of the predestinate: let him be anathema." Denzinger, n. 825 (cf. n. 805).

"If anyone saith that he will for certain, of an absolute and infallible certainty, have that great *gift of perseverance* unto the end, unless he have learned this by special revelation: let him be anathema." Denzinger, n. 826 (cf. n. 806). See also, on the divine motion, the *Catechism of the Council of Trent,* Part I, ch. i, art. 1, sec. 6, "Providence." Cf. *infra,* Appendix IV, ch. iv, a. 4.

human life, *this is because we believe ourselves to be alone when acting; we forget that God is in us and with us.* It is said at times that the doctrine of St. Thomas could not be preached; on the contrary, the more sublime the preaching is, the more it resembles the very terminology employed by the holy doctor who follows St. Augustine and St. Paul.

Molinism criticizes Thomism for being a harsh doctrine which diminishes hope in us. "It is not true, as some suppose, that Molinism opens up more abundant sources of God's mercy and grace and that it proposes to give us a more efficacious grace. On the contrary, it is because it asks less from God, that it leaves more to man. When God has stirred up in the soul indeliberate knowledge and impulses, His work is finished. It is now for man to complete the work by adding his consent, or, by not doing so, to make the grace become useless and barren." [145]

Thomism, far from entrusting our salvation to human frailty, places it in the hands of God our Savior. Far indeed from being opposed to the virtue of hope, it inclines us to put all our trust in God and not in ourselves. *Hope is a theological virtue, and its formal motive is the help of God (Deus auxilians), and not our will power.*[146] Should we not have to *despair* of attaining our supernatural end if we had to rely upon our own strength? [147]

[145] Guillermin, *ibid.*, p. 67.

[146] *Summa,* IIa IIae, q. 17, a. 4, 5.

[147] Our Lord (Luke 18: 1) "spoke also a parable to his disciples that we *ought always to pray* and not to faint. . . . And to some who trusted in themselves as just and despised others, he spoke also this parable: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee and the other a publican. The Pharisee standing prayed thus with himself: O God, I give thee thanks that I am not as the rest of men extortioners, unjust, adulterers, as also is this publican. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess. The publican, standing afar off, would not so much as lift up his eyes towards heaven, but struck his breast, saying: O God, be merciful to me a sinner. I say to you, this man went down into his house justified rather than the other; for everyone that exalteth himself shall be humbled and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." Cf. Bossuet, *Elévations,* 18th week, 15th elevation, "The mystery of grace."

Concerning this parable, St. Augustine (Sermon 115, ch. iii) remarks against

Although we are not certain [148] that God will deign always to point out our faults to us and give us the grace of final perseverance, yet we are much less certain of our own will, which so often is indifferent to true good and seeks what is merely apparent good. The rectitude of God's ways is of a different certainty from that of our own heart. On this point one may read Bossuet's fine exposition of the doctrine of grace.[149]

Immediately when great difficulties arise, let us have recourse to this expedient and say to ourselves: I must pray and watch out not to fall, and God in His good time, at the hour when duty calls upon me to act, will give me His supremely efficacious grace, and I shall act without fail. This will be the confirmation of our hope.

the Pelagians: "Let them see now, let them listen to their impious chatter, whoever they may be, presuming on their own strength; let them listen to what they say: God made me a man, I made myself just."

[148] The *certitude of hope* must not be confounded with *that of faith*. It is the teaching of the Council of Trent against the Protestants: "If anyone saith that he will for certain, of an absolute and infallible certainty, have that great *gift of perseverance* unto the end, unless he have learned this by special revelation: let him be anathema." Denzinger, n. 826; cf. n. 806. On the certitude of hope, cf. IIa IIae, q. 18, a. 4.

[149] Bossuet, *Elévations*, 18th week, 15th elevation: "Man says to himself: I have my free will; God made me free, and I wish to make myself just. I wish the act which decides my eternal salvation to come originally from myself. Thus one wishes in some way to glory in oneself. Where are you going, frail vessel? You are going to dash against the rocks and deprive yourself of the help of God, who gives it only to the humble, and who makes them humble in order to help them. . . . God wishes you to ask Him to help you in all the good actions you have to perform; when you have performed them, God wishes you to thank Him for having performed them. He does not wish, however, that you should remain inactive and make no effort; but in the efforts you make He wishes you to be as if you had to do everything by yourself and not glory in yourself, but be as if you had done nothing.

"I cannot: I wish to find something that I attribute to myself in my free will, which I cannot grant in this abandonment to grace. Proud contradictor, do you wish to grant these things or truly believe that God grants them? He grants them in such a way that He wishes, without any lessening of activity on your part, that you should attribute finally to Him the entire work of your salvation; for He is the Savior and He says: 'Besides me there is no God' (Is. 44: 6). Believe, indeed, that Jesus Christ is the Savior, and all contradictions will disappear."

What must a priest do who is unsuccessful in converting a dying sinner? If the priest is persuaded that God is the master of this sinful will, above all things *he will pray.*[150] If, on the other hand, he imagines that God exerts only an external influence on this will by means of circumstances, good thoughts, and good inspirations, external to the salutary consent of the will, the priest may lose too much time in employing superficial means; his prayer may lack that holy boldness which we admire in the saints.

Scripture teaches us to place all our trust, not in ourselves, but in God: "Have mercy on me, O God, according to thy great mercy" (Ps. 50). "Into Thy hands I commend my spirit" (Ps. 30:6). "Create a clean heart in me, O God; and renew a right spirit within my bowels" (Ps. 50:12). "Convert us, O Lord, to Thee, and we shall be converted" (Lam. 5:21; Jerem. 31:18).

In concluding this chapter, it is of importance for us to connect the solution of the antinomies relating to liberty with that of the fundamental antinomy previously examined (nn. 54, 57).

The mystery of salvation brings us back to that of the reconciliation of God's mercy with His justice. St. Augustine (*De correptione et gratia,* chs. v, vi, xi) says repeatedly that it is by reason of His mercy that God gives to some the efficacious grace of final perseverance by which they are saved; it is by reason of His justice that He refuses this to others on account of their culpable and frequent failures which He permits for very sublime reasons of which His wisdom is the judge. The predestined must none the less, following the example of the Crucified and by His power, pay their debt to divine justice; the others are the object of God's mercy, since they receive the necessary and superabundant graces that their frequent failures finally render sterile. The least favored receive sufficient grace to pray, and if they did not resist it,

[150] The purpose of prayer is not to change the dispositions of divine Providence. On the contrary, from all eternity God wishes us to pray so that we may obtain the grace which He has decided to give us. IIa IIae, q. 83, a. 2.

by means of a series of graces they would arrive at justification.

Therefore this mystery of salvation brings us back then to that of the reconciliation of God's mercy with His justice. We have seen that these two attributes are identical with divine love and that this identification does not destroy them, but reinforces them and enables them to exist in a pure state, freed from all imperfection.[151] It is by the divine goodness that St. Thomas throws light upon the mystery of predestination. The sovereign Good has two subordinate aspects which demand their manifestation. It is above all essentially communicative, diffusive of itself: this is the principle of mercy. But it has also an absolute right to be loved above all things: this is the principle of avenging justice, proclaiming against those who deny it, this supreme and inalienable right which is the principle of all obligation. "The reason for the predestination of some, and reprobation of others," says St. Thomas,[152] "must be sought for in the goodness of God. Thus He is said to have made all things through His goodness, so that the divine goodness might be represented in things. Now, it is necessary that God's goodness, which in itself is *one* and *undivided,* should be manifested in *many* ways in His creation, because creatures in themselves cannot attain to the simplicity of God. Thus it is that for the completion of the universe different grades of being are required, some of which hold a high and some a low place in the universe. That this multiformity of grades may be preserved in things, God allows certain evils, so as to give occasion for many good things to happen. Let us then consider the whole human race, as we consider the whole universe. God wills to manifest His goodness in men; in respect of those whom He predestines, by means of His mercy, in sparing them; and in respect of others, whom He reprobates, by means of His justice, in punishing them. This is the reason why God elects some and rejects

[151] N. 51 and n. 57, 5.
[152] See Ia, q. 23, a. 5 ad 3um.

others. To this the Apostle refers, saying (Rom. 9:22): 'What if God, willing to show His wrath (that is, the vengeance of His justice), and to make His power known, endured (that is, permitted), with much patience, vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction, that He might show the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy which He hath prepared unto glory.'"

So speaks St. Thomas, following St. Paul. For a complete understanding of their statements, it must be said that the sinner is self-sufficient for the purpose of sinning and remaining in sin. It is God who inspires the saints; He does not, to be sure, urge the persecutors to attack Christ and His Church. Their wilful malice, at times of a refined nature, comes only from themselves. God merely permits it, though He condemns it. It will contribute to the manifestation of His justice and consequently of His goodness.

Such is the final answer to the problem of evil. Far from opposing the existence of God, it presupposes that existence, and has its foundation in the two fundamental aspects of the sovereign Good. But it must be said that this is within the reach only of the perfect, as St. Paul declares (I Cor. 2:6–14): "We speak wisdom among the perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, neither of the princes of this world that come to nought. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, a wisdom which is hidden, which God ordained before the world, unto our glory. . . . But the sensual man perceiveth not these things that are of the spirit of God. For it is foolishness to him, and he cannot understand because it is spiritually examined."

When in this life the wicked seem to triumph, when we contemplate this doctrine of salvation with simplicity and purity of heart, after praying, then, as Pascal says concerning the Passion, "we shall find it so great, that we shall have no reason to be scandalized at a baseness that is not there. But there are some who can admire only carnal types of grandeur, as if there were none of the spiritual order; and there are others who admire only types that

are spiritual, as if there were not infinitely loftier ones in wisdom."

Many obscurities remain, because we do not know the intimate mode in which mercy and justice are identified in divine love. As our knowledge is of necessity incomplete, justice seems to us too rigid, and mercy arbitrary. It is a profound mystery which adds to the transcendent obscurity of divine Being, which is that of divine liberty and its most hidden predilections. In this life our analogical notions are peculiarly deficient, being too determinate. The more they determine the primary notion of being, the less they manifest the plenitude of the divine Being (Ia, q. 13, a. 11). In reality, divine mercy and justice never operate separately; the most sublime graces accompany the greatest of divine requirements, as we see in the life of Christ and of the saints. On the other hand, afflictions are always tempered by mercy (Ia, q. 21, a. 4).

Hence divine love cannot be the love of the sovereign Good without being at the same time a holy hatred of evil. Great contemplatives, like Blessed Angela of Foligno, have caught a glimpse in this life, of the intimate reconciliation which we fail to recognize. Raised to a higher degree of prayer than any she had previously known, Blessed Angela arrived at such a knowledge of God's justice and of the rectitude of His judgments that she wrote: "I love all good things and all evil things, benefactions and malefactions. *Nothing disrupts the harmony for me.* I enjoy great peace and have great veneration for the divine judgments. . . . I do not see more clearly the goodness of God in a saint or in all the saints than in one of the damned or in all the damned. But this abyss of goodness was shown to me but once; it left in me a remembrance and a joy that are eternal. . . . The soul that, having gone down into the abyss, has caught a glimpse of the justice of God's ways, will henceforth look upon creatures as the servants of His glory." [153] St. Thomas says that in the punishment of the

[153] *Le livre des visions et des instructions de la Bienheureuse Angèle de Foligno,*

damned is to be seen the order of divine justice, and the absolute right of the sovereign Goodness to be loved above all things.[154]

"Love is strong as death, jealousy as hard as hell" (Cant. 8:6). Love is strong as death, its holy hatred of evil unchangeable as hell, its ardor is as the burning of fire, it is a flame of Jehovah. Torrents of iniquity cannot quench love. It will always have the last word.

Bk. I, ch. xxiv, Hello's French translation. But these words must be taken in their mystical sense so as to avoid Eckhard's proposition that: *"In every deed,* even an evil one, evil I say both of sin and punishment, the glory of God is *equally* manifested and reflected." Denzinger, n. 504. The truth of the matter is that God's justice is as infinite as His mercy, and that they manifest, each in its way, the holiness and goodness of God. Cf. Ia, q. 23, a. 5 ad 3um.

[154] *Supplement to the Summa,* q. 94, a. 3; *Quodlibet* VIII, q. 7, a. 1.

CHAPTER V

God's Ineffability and the Absurdity of the Unknowable. Conclusion and Confirmation

66) *God's ineffability.*

It comes from His absolute simplicity, which consists of all perfections eminently in harmony, and is at the same time sanctity and supreme beauty.

The solution of the antinomies brings us to the question of God's ineffability and the theoretical and practical consequences of the identification of the absolute attributes in God.

As we said (*supra,* n. 56), the unity of the primary notions common to God and creatures is only a unity of proportionality. Hence the perfections they express can be contained formally in God and are identical in Him. Therefore we maintain, on the one hand, God's knowableness and, on the other, His transcendence and ineffability which are the result of His absolute simplicity.

The divine essence thus appears as the highest realization of the *principle of identity* or non-contradiction, which is the fundamental law of thought. If our thought has objective validity (if it is the thought of something and not of nothing), its supreme law must be also the supreme law of being. Consequently the first reality, which is the principle of all things, cannot be this composite and changing world; it must be perfectly identical with itself and must of necessity be to being as A is to A. That is not the ontological argument which is an illegitimate transition from the abstract and analogical idea of God to His existence. It is the

argument based on contingency in abbreviated form, for the contingency in the world is shown by the opposition presented between its perpetual [1] *change* and *composition,*[2] and the principle of *identity* which is the supreme law of our thought. For the divine identity to be rich in its eminent possession of all absolute perfections participated in by creatures, necessarily being, thought, and love are identical, included as they are in the formal notion of Deity. *The Deity is thus above being* (super-being), *and is still being in a pure state,* as it is the Thought of Thought and the subsisting love of the supreme Good (*formally and eminently*). "The perfect unity of God requires that what are manifold and divided in others should exist in Him simply and unitedly." (St. Thomas, Ia, q. 13, a. 4 ad 3um, and a. 5.)

From this it follows that the Deity as such is naturally unknowable and consequently ineffable. It is unknowable inasmuch as it infinitely surpasses the natural means of knowing possessed by a created intelligence; for these means, to be proportionate to this intelligence, must be merely creatures or abstract concepts of creatures, and between these latter and God there can be only a similarity by way of analogy (Ia, q. 12, a. 4, 11, 12; q. 13, a. 1). The Deity cannot be naturally known by a proper concept, but only by analogically common concepts which express what is proper to God merely in a negative and relative way. Consequently the Deity cannot be defined, and remains ineffable. "In this life we cannot see the essence of God; but we know God from creatures as their principle, and also by way of excellence and exclusion. In this way, therefore, He can be named by us from creatures, yet not so that the name signifying Him expresses the divine essence in itself" (Ia, q. 13, a. 1). And the names which most properly apply to the Deity are those which are less determined, more uni-

[1] Cf. Ia, q. 2, a. 3, the first three proofs for the existence of God.
[2] *Ibid.,* the fourth proof.

versal and absolute, as "He who is" (Ia, q. 13, a. 11). But such as the Deity is in itself remains inexpressible.

Only supernatural revelation can make the intimate life of God known to us by faith and afterwards by vision. "What eye hath not seen nor ear heard, what hath not entered into the heart of man . . . God hath revealed them by His Spirit. For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (I Cor. 2:9). This revelation initiates us into the very knowledge of God; it teaches us the existence of the Holy Trinity, and gives us a glimpse of the relation of this supreme mystery to the other mysteries which originate from it and terminate in it. Far from impairing our autonomy by demanding an act of belief from us, it prepares us for the evidence enjoyed by the blessed in heaven: "It is for the disciple to believe," said Aristotle. But in this life the supreme mystery that would illumine all the others, remains the most obscure for us. "We walk by faith and not by sight" (II Cor. 5:7). True, St. Paul "was caught up into paradise," but there he heard "secret words which it is not granted to man to utter" (II Cor. 12:4, and St. Thomas' commentary).

Can the blessed who see God face to face express this, if not by human speech, at least by a word of the mind, by a purely interior locution? St. Thomas (Ia, q. 12, a. 2, and Commentary of John of St. Thomas) replies that it is impossible. A more sublime idea of God's ineffability could not be given. The blessed, who contemplate intellectually and immediately this eternally subsisting and pure intellectual light which is identical with the love of the supreme Good, cannot express the object of their contemplation by a mental word. How could the ever actual intellection, which is Pure Act in the intelligible order, be contained within the limits of a created idea which is intelligible only by participation? In the finite there cannot be a homogeneous representation of the Deity that expresses and presents it such as it is in itself. As Schee-

ben very well says, "the intellect in the beatific vision is so sustained by God and immersed in Him that it could not grasp and impress on its mind the object of its vision. Thus a person confronted by an impressive scene loses the gift of speech; he cannot dominate, sufficiently master what he sees, so as to give it adequate expression in his thoughts" (Scheeben, *Dogmatik,* Vol. I, sec. 81, p. 574).

God, such as He is in Himself, can be expressed only by the consubstantial word which is the eternal Word, the "brightness of eternal light; and the unspotted mirror and image of His goodness" (Wisdom 7:26), the "brightness of His glory and the figure of His substance" (Heb. 1:3). Cf. Ia, q. 34, 35.

This ineffability is in no way opposed to the knowableness of God which we have already defended. We have positive knowledge of the analogous perfections that are common to creatures and to God, and it is *He* indeed whom we reach in this way, but not *such as He is in Himself,* for we perceive the divine mode of these absolute perfections only in a negative and relative way. Thus we truly know the heart of our friends, though we do not enter into their intimate feelings such as they are in themselves. "For what man knoweth the things of a man, but the spirit of a man that is in him? So the things also that are of God, no man knoweth, but the Spirit of God" (I Cor. 2:11).

The doctrine of St. Thomas, as we have explained it, is clearly in agreement with that of the orthodox mystics who have strongly insisted on God's ineffability, such as Dionysius or St. John of the Cross. Without retracting anything we have said against the Agnosticism of Maimonides and the far more radical Agnosticism of the moderns, we find it an easy matter to declare that we understand better the ways of negation and eminence. These ways, indeed, withdraw us from the created mode of the absolute perfections and remind us that the intimate life of God is infinitely

superior to the manifold ideas we can form of it, ideas which would become idols if we took them for adequate representations of the Deity. Says Dionysius: "There is a more perfect knowledge of God which is the result of a sublime ignorance and which is acquired in an incomprehensible union; it is when the soul, forsaking all things and forgetting itself, is immersed in the ocean of divine glory and illumined by the abysmal splendors of the unfathomable wisdom" (*De nom. div.*, VII, 3). *"In this translucent obscurity, it sees* and knows *precisely by mystic ignorance* Him who entirely escapes our vision and knowledge" (*Mystical Theology,* ch. ii).

St. John of the Cross (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel,* Bk. II, chs. vii, viii, ix) requires the sacrifice of the senses and reasoning for one to arrive at the higher degree of contemplation. "Nothing, absolutely nothing which the imagination can represent and the mind conceive in this world, can serve as proximate means of union with God." This union is effected in the night of faith by an experimental and indistinct knowledge which does not stop at the diverse attributes of God, but rises in a sense above every determinate idea; it is the perfection of the eminent and negative way.

St. Albert the Great (*De adhaerendo Deo,* and *In lib. de myst. theol.*) and St. Thomas speak in the same way. St. Thomas (IIa IIae, q. 180, a. 6), following Dionysius, distinguishes three degrees in contemplation. In the first we contemplate God in the mirror of sensible things or by means of comparisons; in the second, by reasoning, as theology does, we rise above sensible things to contemplate God in the mirror of intelligible truths and of the various mysteries of salvation; in the third, contemplation rises above the multiplicity of images and ideas and becomes a simple looking at God in the obscurity of faith. "At the end of discursive reasoning, the soul concentrates its attention upon the contemplation of one simple truth." "But in the soul, *before it attains to this uni-*

formity, ■ twofold difformity must of necessity be removed from it: first, that which arises from a diversity of external things, and secondly that which is the result of discursive reasoning." (IIa IIae, q. 180, a. 6.) Rich in the multiplicity of the lower degrees, this very simple and uniform contemplation remains inevitably in obscurity in this life (IIa IIae, q. 8, a. 2); we may say in a sense that it is plunged in an ever more obscure night, for it is identified with the ever more profound conviction that God is above all ideas that we can form of Him. That does not prevent the contemplation from being ever more certain of the harmonious and ineffable union of all the absolute perfections in the Deity. God thus appears more and more like an infinite ocean of substance, *pelagus substantiae infinitum*. This phrase of St. John Damascene which St. Thomas is fond of quoting (Ia, q. 13, a. 11), is a way of expressing that we know of God rather how He is not, than how He is. "Concerning the divine essence we must consider the manner of its existence, or, rather, what is not the manner of its existence" (Ia, q. 2). This knowledge, however obscure, is not less savory (*sapientia* = *sapida scientia*) when it proceeds from the charity of the Holy Spirit which makes itself felt in us as the soul of our soul, the life of our life (cf. IIa IIae, q. 45, a. 2).

By this classical doctrine of contemplation, Thomism, adopting the *philosophy of being*, joins with the doctrine of St. Augustine which follows rather the *philosophy of good*. Through lack of systematization, unfortunately these two kindred concepts have at times been too much separated, as if they were irreconcilable.[3] Considering St. Thomas too exclusively as a philosopher, as a Christian Aristotelian, was underestimating him and did not take

[3] This exaggeration is to be found in writers of Augustinian tendency; but, like Laberthonnière (*Annales de philosophie chrétienne*, 1905–1913), by reason of a Nominalism of modern origin, they are far removed from St. Augustine. This exaggeration is found again also in writers of opposite tendency who have treated of the history of medieval philosophy in a way favorable to Thomism, though not insisting sufficiently on what is essentially traditional in it.

sufficiently into account that he was also a theologian and a saint.[4]

The aspects of being and goodness are already reconciled in philosophy; *in itself,* being precedes goodness because it is simpler, more absolute, more universal; *in the order of causality,* goodness precedes being as the end is superior to the formal cause. St. Thomas himself thus is in accord with Dionysius (Ia, q. 5, a. 2 ad 1um).

But the aspects of being and goodness are reconciled with far greater reason in theology, for the formal object of theology, like that of supernatural faith, is *God,* not precisely under the aspect of *being* by which He is accessible to metaphysics, but *under the aspect of Deity.* Now in the mysterious eminence of the Deity, being and goodness reappear formally and are identified. "Sacred doctrine," says St. Thomas, "essentially treats of God . . . not only so far as He can be known through creatures, but also so far as He is known to Himself alone and revealed to others . . . and all things are treated of under the *aspect of God,* either because they are God Himself, or because they refer to God as their beginning and end" (Ia, q. 1, a. 6, 7).

But it is especially in contemplation, to which faith and theology are directed, that St. Thomas and St. Augustine join hands without anything being able to separate them. We can have faith and theology without sanctifying grace and charity, but not contemplation, for this proceeds from the gift of wisdom (IIa IIae, q. 45, a. 4). Says St. Thomas: "This gift makes us judge rightly of divine things by a certain *connaturalness* and *union with God*

[4] It has been said of him that he was an "innovator." This word, according to its current meaning, is not accepted by the Church. In the higher light which illumined him, neither would St. Thomas let himself be called by such a name. Does not this apparent eulogy depreciate and make us forget what savors of eternity in his writings? The opponents of Thomism, moreover, snatch at this word and point out that, if St. Thomas was an innovator, we must return to the tradition previous to his time, or advance beyond him as he advanced beyond Augustinianism, separating ourselves from him.

which is effected by charity," and by sanctifying grace which is a participation of the *divine nature,* in so far precisely as it is divine.

In this absolutely simple eminent object, God as such, we have the divine attributes reconciled and identified with the theological conception which, to treat of realities as they are in themselves, derives its inspiration especially from the supreme Being, and the conception which, to lead us to Him, derives its inspiration from supreme Goodness which is our final end.

God's ineffability proceeds, therefore, from His absolute simplicity which is eminent harmony. It is *unity* most profound in *diversity* apparently the least reconcilable; it is the identification of absolute immutability and perfect liberty, of sovereign wisdom and good pleasure which is its own reason, of most inflexible justice, and most compassionate mercy. This harmony constitutes both the holiness and the beauty of God. *Holiness* is the indissoluble union of all absolute perfections, purified of all imperfection; it is Perfection itself, immutable and immaculate (IIa IIae, q. 81, a. 8). *Divine beauty* is the splendor of all perfections in harmonious agreement, as, in the created order, *beauty* is the splendor resulting from the combination of all the transcendentals, of being, unity, truth, and goodness; or, more particularly, it is the brightness of a harmonious unity of proportion in the integrity of the parts (*splendor, proportio, integritas;* cf. Ia, q. 39, a. 8).

As a recent critic remarks, "we cannot sufficiently admire how this doctrine of St. Thomas gives the fullest scope to the intellect and at the same time (but perhaps even on account of that) is most solicitous to safeguard the profundity of God's mysteries. It will not surprise anyone that such metaphysical speculations reach the heights of the most sublime poetry, the lyric beauty of sacred chant." [5]

This mysterious identification of the absolute perfections in God

[5] Dusmesnil, the author of "La Sophistique contemporaine," in *L'Amitié de France,* August 1913, p. 248.

is the principle from which an infinite number of speculative and practical consequences are derived. We should like to point out some of them. After that we will compare this ineffability of the true God with the absurdity of "the Unknowable." All the great philosophical, social, and religious errors of our times arise from this absurdity and terminate in it.

67) *Progressive harmony of the apparently conflicting perfections in the life of grace, which is sanctity.*

To Agnosticism which declares that the divine attributes are irreconcilable, the life of the saints is a practical answer, because it is itself here on earth the reconciliation of perfections which seem the most opposed to one another. Sanctifying grace makes us participate in the Deity as such, whereas by nature we are like to God only according to the common perfections of being, life, intelligence, etc.

That is why our supernatural life, by a progressive purification (purgative way), must result not only in the constant exercise of different virtues under the light of faith (illuminative way), but also in the fusion of virtues apparently the least reconcilable, and must end in continual union with the very source of sanctity (unitive way). Moral purification which destroys every germ of disorder in us, corresponds to metaphysical purification which removes all imperfection from the absolute perfections. Just as it is impossible to conceive of the identification of the divine attributes when we forget to purify them of every kind of imperfection, so it is impossible, without mortification, to realize the true connection and harmony between the virtues, in the wisdom and love of God. Mortification in itself does not suffice; there must be also passive purifications which are the profound operation of the Holy Spirit in us.

Thus in our spiritual life there is and must be, more and more, a certain identification of *knowledge* and *love,* especially in the

contemplation which unites us with God, which is a simple look utterly penetrated by supernatural love (IIa IIae, q. 180, a. 1, 6). To know God in this manner,[6] we must love Him, and all those who love Him know Him in this manner, at least at certain times. Says the Apostle St. John: "Dearly beloved, let us love one another, for charity is of God. And *everyone that loveth* is born of God *and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is charity*" (I John 4:7, 8). There is not here juxtaposition of light and life, there is *light of life.* "I am the light of the world; he that followeth Me walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12). This light of life proceeds from life essentially so, which is light: "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4).

As we see in the souls of the saints, from the progress made in this supernatural life, perfections seemingly the least reconcilable are united and in that way, far from being destructive of each other, they are constantly strengthened. Thus knowledge and love, speculation and practice,[7] or rather, *contemplation and action,* interpenetrate each other in a more and more intimate way. St. Thomas also considers both the active and the purely contemplative life to be less perfect than the apostolic life which is a combination of both.[8] Like Christ and His disciples, the apostle must be a contemplative, bestowing upon others the benefit of his contemplation for their salvation. Contemplation must be the culminating point of his endeavors in this life;[9] instead of impeding his apostolic activity, it must be the source of that activity. If he

[6] If Blondel had meant nothing else than this, he and the Thomists would have been of one mind long ago.

[7] Thus St. Thomas teaches that supernatural faith, the intellectual gifts of the Holy Ghost and even theology are at the same time eminently speculative and practical. Cf. IIa IIae, q. 8, a. 3; q. 9, a. 3; q. 45, a. 3; Ia, q. 1, a. 4.

[8] Cf. IIa IIae, q. 188, a. 6, "Just as illumination is greater than mere light, so *to impart to others the fruit of contemplation* is greater than mere contemplation."

[9] Cf. Salmanticenses, on IIa IIae, q. 188: The relations between contemplation and action.

has not in some measure at least arrived at this, his words are lifeless; he preaches divine things in too human a way; he conveys the letter of the sacred sciences, but not the spirit. Incapable of being fired with that holy enthusiasm for the things of eternity, he becomes enamored of the ideas of the day. Instead of bringing souls to God, he seeks a vain glory. Since unity has not been established from above through the harmony prevailing between nature and grace, it is established from below by confusing them. When, on the contrary, we consider the apostolate of St. Dominic or St. Vincent Ferrer, is there any more intimate unity of contemplation and of action?

As the spiritual life progresses, *in contemplation* itself the ineffability and certainty, as also the oneness of view and infinite variety of applications, grow more and more in accord.

These oppositions are particularly striking in faith. It is at the same time quite supernatural in its motive, and reasonable in the signs which confirm the word of God. It is obscure and yet absolutely certain; it is unchangeable and yet free, contemplative and very practical. It soars to the sublimest of God's mysteries, and descends to the smallest details of our life.

The same is the case, in due proportions, with the science of faith. Dogmatic, moral, and mystical theology constitute but one and the same eminent science, "a participation in the science of God and the blessed" (Ia, q. 2, a. 2 and 4). In the obscurity of faith, sacred doctrine treats of the same object that the saints contemplate in heaven, namely, God, the operations proceeding from Him, and the return of creatures to Him. Hence the progress of theology must be accomplished rather more by unification than by extension; the discovery of new documents or new applications, however useful, is of secondary importance; the main thing is to approach it in the *spirit* of the science of the saints, to grasp more and more the connection between the revealed mysteries, and especially their connection with the supreme mystery,

the vision of which constitutes our final end. Theology tends essentially to contemplation or it ceases to be a "participation in the science of God and the blessed," and becomes a barren collection of texts in which there is no connection between the revealed mysteries, and in which the sacrament of Penance is of as much importance as the Holy Trinity. True progress is not adjusted to future time but to eternity, in which the unification of knowledge is completed. From this higher point of view, St. Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century was more advanced than we are today, if his theological insight was purer and nearer than ours in the science of God. (On theology, see Vatican Council, Denzinger, n. 1796: "Reason, indeed, enlightened by faith, when it seeks *earnestly, piously, and calmly,* attains *by a gift from God* some, and that a *very fruitful,* understanding of mysteries partly from the analogy of those things which it naturally knows, partly from the relations which the mysteries bear to one another and to the last end of man.")

Likewise progress *in action* must be made especially from the standpoint of quality and unity. It consists in an ever closer union of the love of God and one's neighbor and hatred of evil, of confident hope and filial fear, of firmness of justice and sweetness of mercy, "of the simplicity of the dove and the prudence of the serpent," of most profound humility and a completely supernatural dignity which forbids our stooping to the opinions of the world which are opposed to the spirit of God. Each moral virtue is an exact rational mean between the excesses and defects of passion. In fact all these spiritual harmonies have found their realization in eminent sanctity.

It is said of the most humble and sweet Virgin, that she is powerful, "terrible as a strong army in battle array." Between her and the spirit of evil, God established an "irreconcilable enmity" (Gen. 3: 15). Personified pride suffers more in being thus conquered by

humility than in being punished by divine omnipotence. This trait in the humility and charity of the Blessed Virgin is indispensable, that her most beautiful and glorious titles may appear in all their splendor. Such are: Mother of our Creator, Mother of divine grace, Mirror of Justice, Refuge of sinners. It is a sublime and simple reconciliation of most diverse divine virtues.

To show us with what "wondrous magnificence" Jesus Christ came, Pascal merely says: "He was humble, patient, holy, holy to God, terrible to the evil spirits, and sinless" (*Pensées*). But it is only in the language of the Church that we find these admirable oppositions properly expressed. "Jesus meek and humble of heart; Jesus most powerful; Jesus God of might, of infinite majesty."

"Heart of Jesus filled with opprobrium; Heart of Jesus patient and most merciful, burning furnace of charity." Where in this world shall we find a more resplendent harmony of the divine perfections?

The aged Simeon said: "This child is set for the fall and for the resurrection of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be contradicted" (Luke 2:34). Did not Christ Himself, who brought "peace to men of good will," utter these strange words: "I came not to send peace but the sword"? (Matt. 10:34.) St. Thomas understands this, according to the words of St. Paul, "of the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:17). Like a sword, this divine word separates those who believe from those who, through malice, refuse to believe.

In these oppositions, what always predominates is infinite mercy which is peace in truth, but in truth alone. "Peace I leave with you. . . . Not as the world giveth, do I give unto you" (John 14:27). The divine light of the Word and the ardor of His charity shine forth conspicuously above all things. "I am come to cast fire on the earth. And what will I, but that it be kindled?" (Luke

12:49.) "This is my commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:12).

In the Church we again meet with this same harmony between things most difficult to reconcile. In her, charity most compassionate and doctrine most firm and uncompromising are united in one love, which is zeal for God's glory and the salvation of souls. She knows she can do no good without combating evil, that she cannot preach the Gospel without fighting heresy. Mercy and firmness of doctrine can exist only when united; separated they die, and we have left but two corpses, namely, humanitarian Liberalism with its false serenity, and fanaticism with its false zeal. It has been said: "The Church is intolerant in principle because she believes; she is tolerant in practice because she loves. The enemies of the Church are tolerant in principle, because they do not believe, and intolerant in practice, because they do not love." On the one hand, theory is opposed to practice; on the other, it penetrates and arranges all things with firmness and gentleness.

The Church here on earth is essentially "militant" and pacific; there is peace in the interior of the country, war at the frontier. Only the saints can express the entirely supernatural import of the strife which must be waged against the flesh, the spirit of the world, and the spirit of evil. Many times they have portrayed the Church "purified by the fire of great tribulations, having the gold of love in her heart, the incense of prayer in her soul, and the myrrh of mortification in her body. She is, as they say, the good odor of Jesus Christ to the poor and little ones, an odor of death to the great and proud ones of the world. Guided by the Holy Spirit, she is not attached to anything, is astonished at nothing, troubled about nothing. She rains upon us the word of God and eternal life. She teaches the straight way that leads to God in purity of truth, according to the Gospel, and not according to the maxims of the world, without fear of any man, however power-

ful he may be. She wields the two-edged sword of the word of God." [10] By this means she discerns the true from the false, good from evil, freeing souls from sin and saving them. Her most discerning enemies, like Proudhon, in their irreligious fanaticism, experience an evil joy in proclaiming it: "Revolution," he wrote, "believes in humanity; the Church believes in God. She believes in Him better than any sect does; she is the purest, the most complete, *the most brilliant manifestation of the divine Essence,* and she alone knows how to adore Him." [11] The harmony of the divine perfections, which in themselves seem the least reconcilable, finds its fullest manifestation in the life of Christ as reproduced in His Church and in His saints. But there is a false harmony which, because of its absurdity, makes us the better appreciate the value of the true harmony. For the light to be brought out in more brilliant contrast, there must forever be shadows. We must not let a false tranquillity of mind prevent us from seeing them.

68) *The false harmony. The Unknowable-absurd, the confusion between being and nothingness.*

Let us start from the most evident facts of the moral order so that we may arrive at the theory. We say that the life of the Church is the highest manifestation of the mysterious harmony which is in God. On the other hand, humanitarian Liberalism or indifference which, in the name of charity, finds fault with the Church for her intolerance, bears the same resemblance to charity as a glass bead does to a diamond. There is precisely the same degree of resemblance in the case of the pharisaical zeal of the sectaries. However opposed these tendencies may be to each other, at times they unite in order the better to simulate justice and goodness. But the counterfeit is generally too crude for anyone to be deceived by it. It would be ridiculous and sacrilegious to com-

[10] The words of Blessed Grignon de Montfort.
[11] Proudhon, *De la justice dans la Revolution et dans l'Eglise,* I, 27.

pare the zeal of an inquisitor like St. Peter Martyr to that of Calvin terrorizing Geneva in his endeavor to reform it, or to that of Robespierre instituting the feast of the Supreme Being and declaiming on liberty, the day before he exempted the Revolutionary Tribunal from the obligation of observing legal procedure. Only perversity or sottishness can compare the mildness and force of the Apostle St. John with the sentimentality and egotistic harshness of Rousseau or the insipidity and cruelty of Saint-Just. Was there ever anything more ridiculous than the sect of Theophilanthropists to which, under the Directory, was entrusted the task of creating the sham of a new religion? For the Christian feasts, were substituted those of Youth, Old Age, Husband and Wife, Agriculture, the Sovereignty of the People. The liturgy of the celebration of the Decadi consisted of silly things in the Rousseau fashion which were quite naturally the sequel, as they were the prelude, to the Terror and the profanation of the altars. It is singularly mysterious that anybody can be so blinded as to confound the purest light with the densest darkness, the highest degree of holiness with sacrilege, the spirit of Christ, the Word of God, with that of the so-called Reformation or that of the French Revolution. "The Light is come into the world and men loved darkness rather than the light," says the Gospel (John 3: 19), and it gives the reason for this.

On the eminent harmony which belongs properly to God and the saints, there is a more learned parody which at times is misleading and which is nothing else but a systematic organization of universal confusion. Harmony enhances and extols all forms of truth and goodness which converge in it. Confusion strives to destroy them though seeming to preserve them intact.

We must pause here a moment. This point will be a practical and theoretical confirmation of our thesis, obtained by the method of *reductio ad absurdum*. Since the adversaries of belief in the true

God have resorted to this method, it will be enough for us to follow them to their ultimate conclusion. It has been said of hypocrisy that it is a homage rendered to virtue. The same may be said of the false reconciliation which strives to reproduce the mystery hidden in the eminence of the Deity. It shows us, if we look at it closely, that the only possible choice is between the true God whose essence is ineffable, and the radically inconceivable absurdity which is posited as the principle of all things.

This fundamental alternative has been formulated theoretically by a philosopher who seems not to have perceived the gravity of the moral consequences of his thesis. William James categorically affirms what many contemporaries state only in veiled terms: "Human experience is radically irrational, or at least non-rational." Says James: "Hegel was the first non-mystical writer to throw away the ordinary logic. . . . Fechner, Royce, and Hegel seem on the truer path. Fechner has never heard of logic's veto, Royce hears the voice but cannily ignores the utterances, Hegel hears them but to spurn them—and all go on their way rejoicing. Shall we alone obey the veto? . . . For my own part, I have finally found myself compelled to give up the logic, fairly, squarely, and irrevocably. It has an imperishable use in human life, but that use is not to make us theoretically acquainted with the essential nature. If you like to employ words eulogistically, you may say that reality obeys a higher logic. . . . *I prefer bluntly to call reality if not irrational, then at least non-rational in its constitution.*" By logic, James means the "logic of identity" based on the principle of non-contradiction. He admits, therefore, with Hegel that an absolute absurdity is what constitutes the real. From this point of view he readily concludes that an "external Creator, . . . an intelligent and moral governor, sounds as odd to most of us as if it were some outlandish religion. The vaster vistas which scientific Evolutionism has opened, and the rising tide of social democratic

ideals, have changed the type of our imagination, and the older monarchical theism is obsolete or obsolescent." After affirming the non-rationality of the real, James adds: "Without the confidence which being able to lean on Bergson's authority gives me, I should never have ventured to urge these particular views of mine upon this ultra critical audience." [12]

In fact, Bergson and Le Roy speak in the same way when they state that, "the principle of non-contradiction is not so universal and necessary as it was believed to be. . . . Being the supreme law of speech and not of thought in general, it has but static force. But there is contradiction in the world as well as identity. Such are these fleeting mobilities, becoming, duration, life." [13] If this life and this becoming are the supreme reality, as these philosophers declare, it follows that contradiction is at the root of all things.

Seriously minded men, sometimes Catholic writers, speak of this new philosophy, the radical absurdity of which is no longer a matter of astonishment for them. What is at the present day surprising, is the facility with which we accept the absurd built up into a system under the veil of the magic word, "Unknowable."

69) *The way which generally leads one to the absurdity of the unknowable: the confusion between good and evil in moral mediocrity.*

How is it possible to arrive at this perversion of intellectual judgment, this violation of what constitutes the very essence of thought? By what way is one led to this unknowable absurd? It is reached in two ways. Many take this course after a life of habitual moral delinquency which they seek to justify from an intellectual standpoint—"one that doth evil hateth the light" (John 3:20). Some philosophers become involved in it by resorting, with

[12] *A Pluralistic Universe*, pp. 211, 207, 212, 208, 29, 215.
[13] Le Roy, *Revue de métaphysique et de morale*, 1905, pp. 200, 204.

more or less conscious intellectual pride, to the use of paradoxes which are at the root of the Empirical or Idealist Agnosticism that we examined in the earlier part of this work.

Generally no one starts on the road which leads to radical absurdity, which is the *confusion of being and nothingness,* except by means of another confusion more or less conscious and voluntary, the *confusion of good and evil.* Here we must recognize the element of truth in a philosophy of action. It is worth our while to insist on this, that it is a practical confirmation of God's existence and supreme perfection of God.

St. Augustine, in the *City of God,* often says: "The two cities are indistinguishable in this world and are, for the time being, a promiscuous gathering; at the end of the world they will be separated and are already so at heart." In one of these two cities, says the saint, the love of God is emphasized even to contempt of self; in the other, the love of self, even to contempt of God. This latter is by its very nature divided; in it we find indolent cowardice and predominance of the passions. Between these two cities there is a blurred zone where white and black are intermingled, where all things get confused, and where we no longer really know whether we are concerned with consciences that are still good or with those already bad. What do they seek first of all: the good or the favors of public opinion? Whom do they serve: *God* or *the world?* And who can boast of having nothing to do with this blurred zone in which, under an appearance of good (*bonum apparens*), begins the confusion between being and nothingness?

Apparent good is all the more dangerous the more it looks like real good. Now, above the extreme forms of evil, such as thorough laziness and brutish commotion, there is room for two things apparently alike, but essentially different and opposed to each other; these are the good and the mediocre. Between excess and defect in evil, good rears its head like a mountain peak; it is the City of

God. The mediocre is situated midway between this culminating point and the opposite forms of vice. It tries to pass itself off as the just mean in which everything *is harmonized* and, in fact, it is a sort of mean in which everything is confused. Let us suppose a triangular elevation the summit of which is good, the extremities of the base are excess and defect in evil, then the place of the mediocre will be exactly in the center of this triangle, halfway up. In fact, it is often called the center, situated between the party representative of order and that of anarchy which is alternately violent and powerless.

St. Thomas, in establishing the philosophy of the rational mean, says: "It could not apply essentially [14] to the virtues of faith, hope, and charity which have God for their object; their measure is to be without measure and always to draw nearer to infinite perfection." But it applies essentially to the moral virtues, and in them the mean is rational only when it takes the place of an extreme, a culminating point to which all our energies converge and in which they are counterpoised over and above the forms opposed to the irrational and evil.[15] If we compare, says St. Thomas, moral virtue to reason which is its rule, its conformity to right reason is an extreme with reference to the deformity of the vices opposed to it by excess and defect. But if we consider the moral virtue ac-

[14] St. Thomas, Ia IIae, q. 64, *De medio virtutum*, a. 4: *"The good of a theological virtue does not consist in a mean,* but *increases the more we approach to the summit.* Accidentally, however, it is possible to find a mean and extremes in theological virtue. Thus hope observes the mean between presumption and despair, in relation to us, in so far, to wit, as a man is said to be presumptuous, through hoping to receive from God a good in excess of his condition; or to despair through failing to hope for that which according to his condition he might hope for. But there can be no excess of hope in comparison with God, whose goodness is infinite."

[15] St. Thomas (Ia IIae, q. 55, a. 3) says: "Virtue implies a perfection of power. Wherefore the virtue of anything is fixed *to the utmost limit of its power.* Now the utmost limit of any power must needs be good, for all evil implies defect. Wherefore Dionysius (*Div. nom.*, ch. iv) says: *"Every evil is a weakness."*

cording to the passion that it regulates, then it constitutes a mean between the excess and defect of this passion.[16]

Moral mediocrity is, on the contrary, only a mean between good or the true mean and the opposite forms of evil. Of rational moderation it retains merely the matter without the form that animated it. It consists, moreover, in the wish to impose upon virtues, those which have God for their object, a measure of which according to their nature they are not susceptible. It makes men of little faith, restless hope, and lukewarm charity.

From the intellectual point of view, says St. Thomas,[17] the true mean consists in being guided by first principles, in affirming exactly *what a thing is*. On the contrary, mediocrity consists in being guided either by current opinions true or false, taking something from each by a sort of arbitrary selection, and in conveniently compromising between all things. It is the essence of opportunism.

But there are several ways of being mediocre. One may be so in a vulgar manner; it is also at times a maturely reflected and studied attitude which presupposes real talent, and under this second form the mediocre may become a most subtle and profound deceptive aspect of evil.

With the vulgar opportunist who prefers an advantageous situ-

[16] St. Thomas (Ia IIae, q. 64, a. 1 ad 1um) says: "If we compare *moral virtue* to reason, then, if we look at that which it has of reason, *it holds the position of one extreme*, which is conformity; while excess and defect take the position of the *other extreme*, which is deformity. If we consider moral virtue *in respect of its matter, then it holds the position of mean*." The mediocre preserves the rational mean only as to its material element; the idea or form which animated this matter has disappeared. On this point, in its relations to Liberalism, cf. Garrigou-Lagrange, *De revelatione*, II, 419–454.

[17] St. Thomas (Ia IIae, q. 64, a. 3) says: "The good of speculative intellectual virtue consists in a certain mean, by way of conformity with things themselves, in so far as the intellect expresses them as being what they are, or as not being what they are not: and it is in this that the nature of truths consists. There will be excess if something false is affirmed, as though something were, which in reality is not. There will be deficiency if something is falsely denied, and declared not to be, whereas in reality it is."

ation to duty, and makes quite a simple application of utilitarian maxims, mediocrity is but a commonplace medley of good and evil. It is the enemy of sublimity and profundity; it is platitude and lukewarmness, ever dull, insipid, and, in spite of its instability which it honors with the name of life, it is a despairing monotony that it calls impassible serenity. "Let us not exaggerate in anything," is its preferred formula. "I do not deny the necessity of religion, but Catholicism exaggerates; Protestantism is more moderate." Truth and goodness, in thus commingling and being subordinated to error and evil, lose all their force and become something mawkish, soft, and fluid, the lukewarmness of which gives one a sense of nausea and recalls those words of the Apocalypse (3: 15): "I would thou wert cold or hot. But because thou art lukewarm, I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth." These are terrible words that God alone can utter before bringing one back to repentance.

In a higher degree, mediocrity is an adroit mingling of the true and the false, and, as it were, a science of good and evil. In this case, the mediocre claims to realize what God was never able to do. It wishes, so it says, to bring everything into harmonious agreement, and it prepares to confound everything, with the result that everything will be confused and destroyed. It begins by taking up its position in the center, equally distant from good and the opposite forms of manifest evil. In order to obtain the favor of all or of the majority, it declares itself the friend of everybody, poses modestly as the sage who can finally effect a reconciliation between the various aspects of truth and those of error. It extends its indulgent attitude to all varieties of evil in order to reunite them even in good. It identifies mercy and justice to the point of pardoning the impenitent and granting to error the same rights as to truth. Is not this the god which the world needs, the god who will finally establish the reign of peace and tranquil order here below, without the necessity of promising a future life? Is it

not the principle of universal harmony? It will be able to declare itself infallible, for it will be the norm of ever changing conciliatory truth. It will be able to call itself impeccable. "Which of you will accuse me of sin?" As it is naturally fugitive, no one can bring any particular accusation against it. Its apparent harshness is but its strength, its weakness is but its mildness and longanimity. If we find fault with it for not combating evil, it has an answer ready, namely, that to combat evil would be to disclose it; moreover, evil itself must be subservient, the best is often the enemy of the good. It quotes the Gospel: "Let the cockle alone, lest perhaps gathering up the cockle, you root up the wheat also together with it" (Matt. 13:29). It speaks continually of moderation and prudence, but it can appreciate zeal as a rare thing which must remain so. Under this reign of universal peace and perfect courtesy, moral misery itself can make its way in the world, masked as correction. Good and evil have so coalesced that it has become impossible to distinguish between them.

If we look at it closely, we readily perceive that, in this commingling, good is found most often enlisted in the service of evil. Undoubtedly under the direction of divine Providence, everything concurs for a higher good, even the evil that is permitted. St. Thomas repeatedly says so and is fond of quoting the metaphysical formula of optimism given by Dionysius, that *every evil is a weakness,*[18] but that if it is a question of number in the human species, he points out on several occasions that it is more frequently evil that is found present. "Evil appears as in the greater number in the human race."[19]

[18] See Ia IIae, q. 55, a. 3; and Dionysius, *Div. nom.*, ch. iv.

[19] St. Thomas, Ia, q. 49, a. 3 ad 5um: "In man alone does evil appear as in the greater number because the good of man as regards the senses is not the good of man as man, that is, in regard to reason. More men seek good with regard to the senses than good according to reason." Consult other references in the general index to the works of St. Thomas under the word *"Malum,"* n. 37; v. g., *De malo*, q. 1, a. 3 ad 17; a. 5 ad 16.

A holy sadness would bring us back to goodness, as one of the beatitudes recorded in the Gospel says.[20] On the other hand, an optimism which is the result of light-mindedness leads the spiritual prodigal into dissipation and at times to degradation.

The refinement of evil is more pronounced in proportion as the goodness which is abused, is of a higher order. Continually on one's lips are the words: the common good, fraternity, universal peace, justice, love and charity. "By the very fact," says Hello,[21] "that charity is pre-eminently the sublime thing, the bad use of its name must be particularly dangerous. *The worst corruption is that of the best.* The more beautiful this name, the more terrible it is, and if it turns against truth armed with all the power that it has received for life, what services will it not render to death? What will happen if we acquire the habit of calling charity universal accommodation to every kind of weakness? Evil does not always desire to expel the good; it asks for the permission of cohabiting with it. A secret instinct warns it that in asking for something, it asks for everything." In consenting to let itself be converted in that way, it knows that everything will turn to its own advantage. From this point of view the toleration of evil, which ought to be fought against in order to save souls, becomes the perfection of charity; and just indignation, which De Maistre called the anger of love, is nothing else but pharisaism and pride.[22]

[20] "Those who mourn are those who know," says St. Augustine on this point in *De Sermone Domini in monte*, ch. iv: "Knowledge is befitting to those who mourn, who have learned by what evils they were overcome which they sought after as being good for them." St. Thomas, too, connects this beatitude with the *gift of knowledge* which judges creatures in God's light. This gift of the Holy Spirit strikes always the right tone between a sanctimonious optimism and a sterile pessimism; it shows at what price one may draw good out of evil (IIa IIae, q. 9, a. 4).

[21] *L'homme*, chapter on "charity."

[22] Hello also says: *"It is time to become humble, for it is time to become proud."* There is no one less proud than the ambitious person always ready to submit to the lies of the world in order to obtain its favors. Pride despises this debasement, but to despise it always and without ostentation, pride must have its basis in

To write the history of Lutheranism or even of Freemasonry, we must speak of them not only with justice, but even, if we may so say, with a willing sympathy. It is a question of method. To criticize a system, however false it may be, we must not judge it by the externals, by the essential principles of reason that it rejects, but approach it from its intrinsic principles courteously and with methodical sympathy.

In following this strange path, unknown to the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, the mind will quickly be brought to realize the philosophical basis of Liberalism that the *Syllabus* and more recently the encyclical *Pascendi* has shown. From this point of view the Church here on earth must cease to be militant,[23] so as to become pacifist and understand finally that the spirit of the world could not be its enemy. As for the Church triumphant, it is nothing more than an emphatic and old-fashioned name, a myth; the more tangible and realizable city of the future replaces it in our hopes. We have faith in humanity. Charity in its conciliatory rôle and indifference to divine things, are but one and the same thing. The meaning of all the absolute perfections is perverted; there is nothing more that prevents us from confounding them with their contraries.

True charity is the love of God above all things and of our neighbor in God and for God. As a consequence, it implies a holy

humility. It is the characteristic of humility never to submit to error and evil, because it always submits to God and to what there is of the divine in all souls. IIa IIae, q. 161, a. 1, 2, 3. "The ambitious always humiliate themselves more than they ought," remarks St. Thomas in his commentary on Matt. ch. iv, with reference to the devil's words: *"If falling down Thou wilt adore me."*

[23] Cf. Kant, *Religion within the Limits of Reason alone*, tr. by Greene and Hudson, 1934, p. 106: "When an historical faith, having become ecclesiastical, embraces the principle of a continual approach to pure religious faith, a church thus characterized can at any time be called the true church; but, since conflict over historical dogmas can never be avoided, it can be spoken of only as the church *militant*, though with the prospect of becoming finally the *changeless and all-unifying church triumphant.*" This final reconciliation of all cults will be Religion within the limits of reason.

hatred of evil; it cannot love the sinner without hating the sin. False charity subordinates the love of God to a false love of our neighbor; it does not hate evil, rather it sympathizes secretly with it and, under the pretext of loving the sinner, it contributes to his ruin.

The triumph of God was shown especially in His mercy by which He drew good out of evil, and a good all the more perfect as the evil had been the more profound. One could say: *"Felix culpa."* There is another triumph which consists in doing what is evil by means of good, and an evil the more irreparable as the good is the more precious.

The desired mediocre obtains the striking success of number. It uses the expression that is only too true, namely: "Evil is in the majority in the human race." It includes the bad, the lukewarm, and the good people that it has deceived. It very cleverly makes use of the latter.[24] If we consider the moral world and its degrees in hierarchical order as an elevated terrain, at the summit of which is God, the mediocre will appropriate for itself a very large part of the base. Very often it has acquired popular acclaim in advance by a vast majority. Mediocrity prefers the authority of numbers to that of the best informed; in its eyes quantity makes up for quality. Thus it is naturally inclined to democracy, which it transforms into democratism. This régime, according to St. Thomas, suits the élite or little groups capable of self-government; among the common people we see it degenerating into Socialism or Sociolatry. Gradually the sovereignty of the people and its passions is substituted for God's supreme dominion, and material progress is accompanied by a moral recoil back to Atheism. The rigorous logic of the *Syllabus* clearly demonstrates this long train

[24] "In all the efforts we shall have to make to come forth from the abyss, let us not forget that *honest people* are the ones who led us into it." Le Play, Letter to Claudio Jannet, being the introduction to his work, *Les Etats Unis contemporains.*

of errors [25] which originate from and end in Atheistic Agnosticism.[26]

Moral mediocrity is in need of intellectual leaders; it chooses them itself and abandons them when change becomes fashionable. It is fond of calling itself the director of conscience, a philosopher pliant enough to remain a Pantheist, though declaring itself a believer in the spiritual and a Christian, but too scrupulous in its knowledge to go as far as Catholicism. This spirit, which dares not advance even to the living God who is the end of all knowledge, is called a bold spirit, a pioneer one that opens up the paths of the future. In fact the line that it has to follow is not

[25] Cf. Denzinger, n. 1718, "Socialismus," and nn. 1694 ff., 1849 ff.

[26] The eminent theologian C. Schaezler in his remarkable work, *Divus Thomas contra Liberalismum,* has shown how Thomism, by its doctrine of God's supreme dominion, by its conception of human liberty and conscience, is the philosophical and theological synthesis which is the very opposite of all the errors condemned by the *Syllabus,* all of which proclaim the absolute supremacy of created liberty. All Catholic manuals of moral and natural law point out, moreover, in a general way, that there is an infinite difference between the social principles of St. Thomas and those of Rousseau's *Social Contract,* which constitute the basis of the *Declaration of the Rights of Man.* The Christian principles, however, have had such an influence that we find traces of them even in this *Declaration,* which may, at first sight, mislead one as to the spirit which animates it. Cf. Leo XIII, Encyclical *Immortale Dei,* against the principles of the "new code."

If great Catholic orators, men of deep faith and ardent charity, submissive sons of the Church, have for a moment favored the liberal spirit, this has been but an accidental feature of their apostolate. It would be peculiarly to depreciate them to insist designedly on this feature so as to leave in the shade what constitutes the very soul of their supernatural action, which is what will always count in the eyes of the Church and before God. As Lacordaire wrote to Montalembert in October 1833, "Conscience, which is everything in the ordinary course of life, is nothing when it is found to be in opposition to authority. The greatest crimes are committed with a false conscience. When yours is without reproach in this matter, you ought not to listen to it, but, indeed, to the voice of the Church which has already been raised, and will be so later on with a power which will beat down all pride." "Never," rightly said A. Nicholas, "has one found more exactly the vulnerable point of *straightforward* Liberalism in its relation with this Naturalism of private conscience not taking into account the supernatural authority of the Church." *Etude historique et critique sur le P. Lacordaire,* p. 139. See also Lacordaire, *Considérations sur le système philosophique de M. de La Mennais* Conclusion.

of the ascendent order, for it does not rise to God; it is merely that of *time,* pointing to the future which as yet is nothing. Absolute Evolutionism, the philosophy of the *"time that is passing,"* is not far off. Throughout the changes of public opinion one no longer looks for the real truth which is declared to be non-existent or inaccessible; only questions are debated. Newspapers announce it with their suggestive headlines. All that, however sad it may be, is most instructive; it is a great motive of credibility in favor of the divine origin of Christianity which alone can rescue us from this mediocrity that is entirely worldly wisdom.

This practical Agnosticism, to justify itself, needs an intellectual foundation. Here one begins to make use of the great philosophical paradoxes which could never succeed in establishing their claims if one were not secretly interested in admitting them. Many souls are thus led into speculative Agnosticism, and this latter, as the Encyclical *Pascendi* points out, paves the way for Atheistic Evolutionism.

70) *How Agnosticism leads to Atheistic Evolutionism: identification of being and nothingness in becoming.*

Agnosticism presents itself at first as a scrupulous love of truth, and the more surely to attain this end it undertakes to revise the methods of science. This word is constantly on its lips. Gradually, without people being aware of it, method is preferred to truth. It matters little what is affirmed, provided this be methodically affirmed. Heretofore method was merely the way leading to the knowledge of truth. The new criticism, for its greater assurance, begins by positively doubting all things; because of a scruple it imprisons itself in subjective phenomena; *to test the natural range of the intellect concerning being, it takes away the essential relation that this latter bears to being,* which is like one who would take the heart out of a sick person to see if he will live yet a long time. The new method is therefore agnostic and be-

comes essentially a way leading to the non-knowledge of the real, which in all cases never brings one to the supernatural nor to the true God. In order to see better, reason blinds itself. Of all the branches of knowledge, philosophy is the one that concerns us most to revive or rather methodize. So long as anyone has not reached an understanding concerning this preliminary question, he will have to reject as non-methodical, non-scientific, every assertion, no matter on what grounds, which claims to embrace an absolute truth.

It is in this sense that Descartes unknowingly sets to work. In his famous *Discourse on Method* he begins by doubting the real validity of the first principle of reason. Why could not God make square circles? Descartes fears that an evil genius makes him believe in the truth of the principle of contradiction and in the existence of an external world. In fact, an evil genius succeeded in making many philosophers believe that the principle of contradiction is false, and that the external world does not exist. Many of the intellectual sons of Descartes seriously maintain that the table on which they write their thoughts exists only in their mind. Did not Berkeley say: *"Esse est percipi:* existence is sense perception"? If they happened to crack their skull against a corner of the wall, it would be merely the quite subjective sensation of a shock which would do away with their sense of consciousness and put an end to their "well-connected" dream, their "real hallucination." When Hegel denies the objective validity of the principle of contradiction, he congratulates Descartes for having opened up the approaches to modern philosophy, for having liberated the spirit from the thraldom of things, for having conceived of our reason as the legislator of the real and no longer as being measured by it.

Henceforth the followers of the separatist philosophy will cease to find their mental pabulum in truth, especially divine truth, in order to plunge themselves into false problems. "Men loved dark-

ness rather than the light" (John 3: 19). If we would prove the existence of God to them, they ask us first to demonstrate the existence of the external world; and before positing the question of the spirituality and the immortality of the soul, we must prove that it is a substance, a real being, and not a collection of phenomena. The strangest thing is this, that Catholics will take seriously this raving of the Idealists and will seek to formulate this dogma as an evaluation of these extravagances. It is a capitulation which deceives itself to the extent of considering itself as a most scientific defence of the faith and a most charitable apostolate.

After being divorced from revealed religion, philosophy, in order to reconstruct a method for itself, is made to go repeatedly through three stages: Empirical Agnosticism, which was brought to its perfection by Hume; Idealistic Agnosticism, formulated by Kant or at least inspired by him; finally, the Evolutional Metaphysics of becoming, formulated by Hegel, which, by an empirical adaptation, has become, as it were, the structure of actual philosophic thought.

According to the new method of Bacon and the Empirics, we must begin by dividing the powers of the mind over all the objects of experience, and gradually we are persuaded that it would be useless to wish to raise ourselves to a higher plane. The poor human intellect is overwhelmed by a mass of material information in which there is nothing but obscurity for it. We are to cherish the notion that, to be philosophically convinced, we must first survey all the systems and experiment with them all; that to have a true notion of religion we must scrutinize all the psychologies and pathologies of the races, analyze the subconscious selves, the thousand varieties of religious sentiment.

This is far removed from that contemplation which we were just now discussing. Mechanism triumphs; the human intellect becomes a machine to register facts, without being able to arrange them in proper order. It does not succeed in discovering

their *raison d'être,* since, on the pretext of method, it has ceased considering being and its first principles, and sees nothing but phenomena. Concepts are merely impoverished remnants of sensations which are presented out of order. Hume's Empiricism is followed slavishly. At the same time, to meet the requirements of morality and religion, sentimentalism of the Rousseau type is adapted alternately to Deism and to Atheistic Pantheism, which succeed each other in various forms.

In this public market of ideas, he wins who makes his wares fashionable by advertising them successfully. Intellectual wretchedness makes its way in science; all it has to do is to observe the rules of "a reputable science." With the modesty of a teaching staff whose mission is to insist on the limits of our knowledge, it denies God and makes a god of itself, without being fully conscious of the insane pride it carries about with it. In its eyes, the principle of all things, even of our intellects, is nothing more than a sort of nothingness, a chaotic matter, an earthly, blind, stupid, and impotent God. There is in this a peculiar kind of silliness which recalls the words of Voltaire about Holbach's *Système de la nature:* "Never perhaps has philosophy uttered a more stupid absurdity or a more notorious falsehood, although it may have been on many other occasions guilty of lying and absurdity." (Letter to Frederick, February, 16, 1773.)

The learned world becomes a tower of Babel in which it is no longer possible for one person to understand another, especially in philosophy. A false meaning has been given to the fundamental notions of being, truth, goodness, knowledge, science, liberty, right, and charity. It is as impossible for them to refute one another as it is for them to come to an agreement.

If it is necessary, however, to meet the needs of intellects by a provisory systematization, at times a very exalted notion is seized upon. Spiritualism is admitted, but an Agnostic Spiritualism. The mind, believing that so far it has been dreaming, blinds

itself that it may see more clearly. Kant, as he himself said, was awakened by Hume from his dogmatic sleep. No longer can he admit a real, but only a purely formal and subjective truth. Reason, instead of being measured by things, becomes the measure of things and absolutely autonomous.[27] Contrary to Empiricism, which is incapable of rising above pleasure and personal interest, we are told to recognize the existence of duty, but a duty without either religious or metaphysical foundation. "Autonomy of the will is that property of it by which it is a law to itself (independently of any property of the objects of volition) . . . If the will seeks the law which is to determine it . . . in the character of any of its objects, there always results a heteronomy." [28] If the moral law were imposed on us externally by God, the will could submit to it only through fear, love, or self-interest; and this would be foreign or contrary to morality. Kant says we must admit for the moral world the view that Rousseau held for the social order, according to which man must prescribe for himself the law that he obeys.[29]

Such a conception of morality leads to a sort of religion, but it is a non-revealed religion, "within the limits of reason," in which the love of humanity and respect for our personal dignity are more and more substituted for the love of God. Kant welcomes the French Revolution enthusiastically and, despite his austerity, sympathizes with Rousseau's sentimentalism, which is so often unmoral. The Savoy curate's profession of faith is susceptible of a new adaptation. Setting aside dogmas, Kant is able to admit a religion which consists in viewing the moral laws as if they were divine commandments and which thereby increases the efficacy of duty as if it were changeable. All the rest, he says, is absurd

[27] Cf. *supra*, nn. 13, 17, 18, 19.

[28] Kant, *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysic of Ethics*, tr. by T. K. Abbott, 1932, p. 71.

[29] *Ibid.*, Introduction.

superstition and condemnable as tending to fraud and perfidy. Belief in revelation is the interior avowal of its unvarying certitude in our eyes. But it is a violation of conscience to declare as true "what cannot be asserted with unconditional assurance." [30]

In his righteousness an unbeliever, Kant appropriates to himself all the respect due to God. This proud and foolish Kantian righteousness opens up the way to pure Rationalism for Protestantism which, like Jansenism, at first glance seems to be the most absolute antithesis of Rationalism.

In spite of its correctness and dignity, this Agnostic Spiritualism reminds one of "the carnal wisdom" mentioned by St. Paul,[31] carnal because it is opposed pre-eminently to the Spirit which is that of God. By its very exaltation, this blind Spiritualism can be the cause, beyond all comparison, of more deep-seated trouble than Materialism, which is manifestly too absurd. Yet many are taken in by it, seeing in the doctrine proposed to them nothing but "the soul of truth," without perceiving that the principle of negation, which in reality animates it, places truth at the service of falsehood, sometimes in spite of the personal intentions of the philosophers who adopt it.[32] One may seek to minimize Kant's incredulity, and insist upon his extreme politeness, his sincere and profound good-will, his trustworthy devotedness, his horror of a lie. Finally, we will be told there is no great difference between Kant and a saint.

Someone has sown tares amongst the wheat and it will soon appear, says the Gospel. On this point St. Thomas remarks that, "He who sows cockle hides himself, saying good things at first;

[30] Kant, *Religion within the Limits of Reason alone*, p. 177; cf. Bk. IV, chs. v, vi.

[31] See St. Thomas' commentary on II Cor. 1: 12.

[32] "In every evil, there is some good," says St. Thomas (Ia, q. 49, a. 3). It is, indeed, a privation in a real subject. Without that, evil would be nothingness itself and there would no more be anything harmful. It is precisely because of its apparent goodness that evil is dangerous.

gradually he mixes it with evil and ends by exposing himself and his doctrine." [33] St. John continually recommends charity to us, warning us not to let ourselves be seduced: "Believe not every spirit" (I John 4: 1). After a certain time it becomes manifest that between truth and undeniable falsehood, between good and evident evil, there is a counterfeiting of the divine action, an operation which tends to identify in its way the various absolute perfections; but instead of uniting them and raising them to their highest degree, it neutralizes and destroys them, though appearing to preserve them intact.

All that is presently cleared up. As the encyclical *Pascendi* points out,[34] Agnosticism soon leads to Pantheistic and finally to Atheistic Evolutionism. Since the principle of all things can no longer be found with certainty in God, it must be sought for in man.

In fact, after Hume and Kant, Fichte declares that a purely subjective truth is not enough; we must again find a real truth. But where? *In ourselves.* We must say of our intellect what the theologians said of God's intellect, that it is the cause of things: *"Scientia hominis causa rerum."* But how is it that there continue to be so many mysteries for our reason which ought to be omniscient?

Hegelian Panlogism finally undertakes to dispel these mysteries and reconcile all things: the identity of being and non-being must be built up into a metaphysical system; it is the normal outcome of the separatist philosophy under the form of absolute Rational-

[33] St. Thomas in his commentary on Matthew, ch. xiii, shows us too on this point the rôle of laicism: "Heretics first of all make a secret of knowledge, because they first of all say what is good and preach to the people, and then they say what is evil about clerics, which people gladly listen to, and thus they turn people away from their love of clerics and consequently of the Church. But afterwards, when they receive their doctrine, their malice is made manifest."

[34] "Once natural theology has been repudiated and all access to revelation closed, through the rejection of the motives of credibility, nay even, when all external revelation has been abolished (if religion like everything else requires an explanation), it is clear that this explanation must not be sought for outside of man." Denzinger, n. 2074.

ism. "All that is real, however irrational it may seem to be, is rational," with a rationality superior to that of the logic of identity or of non-contradiction.[35] Hence everything is explained and justified. Falsehood is but an incomplete truth which seeks to complete itself, evil is but an imperfect good which tends to perfect itself, heresy is but a new dogma in the becoming. There is no absolute truth, and consequently no absolute error. What appears at first sight as a radical error, the negation of the principle of identity or of contradiction, is a form of highest truth. Nothing is identical with itself, everything is changing; the opposition between being and nothingness is but an opposition in words; in reality, nothing is, everything is becoming; becoming, which both is and is not, is its own sufficient reason; it contains the solution of all the antitheses, and in it are identified being and non-being, and consequently truth and falsehood, good and evil.

It is impossible to go any farther. Such is the supreme law of universal confusion, an ironical reproduction of the harmony that is in God. It is the last word of science which teaches us to combine good and evil. For the principle of all things we have a bad goodness, a divine perversity, a god who is perpetually making and destroying himself. The devil, if he still exists, can say: "God and I are one." They will persuade you that there is nothing subversive in this, that fundamentally this doctrine is conservative. In ancient times Heraclitus said: "Everything is changing, everything includes in itself the denial of itself, everything is both itself and its contrary. But this strife between contraries is not a disorder, it is the mother of all things." The old Greek declared that the echo of his voice would resound throughout the ages, and indeed he is really the one whom we hear in the Hegelian philosophy which poses as the guardian, and that too, as Gomperz observes, in the revolutionary theories of a Proudhon.

[35] See Vol. I, n. 22: Hegel's objection to the validity of the principle of contradiction.

Hegel, after relegating what formally constitutes the divine nature to becoming, can well enough attempt a new interpretation of the dogmas of Christianity. He finds again everywhere the Trinity and traces of it in the three stages of evolution: thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. The most mysterious of dogmas is demonstrated. We see God as He sees Himself. He is conscious of Himself in us. The Incarnation is thus renewed in each one who understands the law of universal evolution. God is realized in us,[36] however perverse we may be. Perversity and charity have the same meaning.

If foolish words come to our lips, there will be found seriously minded men to answer: "Let us not exaggerate in anything; a very similar doctrine, one worthy of all respect, is to be found in the mystical theology of Dionysius or in that of St. John of the Cross." This answer is but the banal application of the posited principles, the quintessence of that wisdom portrayed by Isaias: "Woe to you that call evil good, and good evil: that put darkness for light, and light for darkness: that put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. Woe to you that are wise in your own eyes and prudent in your own conceits" (Isaias 5: 20–21).

Error cannot descend lower; the Separatist philosophy has noth-

[36] We find the same teaching revamped in a sentimental way by naturalistic mysticism or mystical sensualism, which finds its expression in the answer of Faust to the question, "Do you believe in God?" "Who will dare say: *I believe*, if faith consists in words? Who will dare say: *I do not believe*, if he listens to the dictates of his conscience? He who contains and sustains all things, contains and sustains you, me, and Himself. He gives the heavens their curvature, He makes the earth firm under our tread. He ordains that the stars peaceably pursue their course. An eternal mystery, visible or invisible, surrounds you. Let us adore this eternal mystery, and when your soul is filled with sentiments of tenderness and happiness, utter words at random. I have not any to prescribe for you. What matters it that you say: Happiness, heart, love, God! Sentiment is everything, the words are to no purpose; and these words are but noise and smoke which hide from us the dazzling brightness of the heavens." Nominalistic Modernism scarcely said other than this. How many have given the naïve answer that Faust wished to receive: "That seems to me to be beautiful and good; it is practically what the priest tells us, more or less."

ing more to teach us; it has again found a doctrine the most radically opposed to divine wisdom. It reproaches Catholicism with the antinomies, and is itself the *avowed fundamental antinomy*. It is the radical corruption of the mind and is incomparably more hateful than that of the flesh. It is as unbearable to a sound mind as a nauseous drink is to the palate. It is detested by God and the Church as a conscious contradiction which seeks to pass itself off for supreme wisdom and harmony. *Instead of identifying the absolute perfections in the pure Act, it identifies, though destroying them, in an ever unstable becoming.* Refusing to admit the absolute truth which is opposed too categorically to falsehood, and admit the absolute good which would be the enemy of evil, it reduces everything to a nameless absurdity, to ▪ parody of the ineffable, to something which is neither being nor nothingness nor truth nor falsehood nor good nor evil, to something which as yet does not exist, but is becoming only to die even before it has lived. Liberalism or false charity, which defends the right of all opinions to exist, has at last found its philosophical foundation: the Unknowable, or rather the absurd itself posited as the principle of all things.

Once this idea is spread abroad, many repeat it without knowing all that is meant by it. And in spite of its author's intentions,[37] what else does the new philosophy affirm? As we pointed out apropos of William James, it is merely an empirical transposition of Hegelian Evolutionism, a return to Heraclitus, to the puerility of philosophy which as yet had not risen to pure Act; more than this, it is a rejuvenation of the sophisms of Protagoras. Like Hegel, Le Roy writes: "The principle of non-contradiction is not as universal and necessary as has been believed. . . . Being the supreme law of speech, but not of thought in general, its influence extends

[37] Cf. Maritain's fine article in the *Revue thomiste*, July 1912, "Les deux bergsonismes," that of intention and that of fact. That of intention arrives at spiritualism and seeks even to reach God; that of fact, in virtue of its principles, arrives at nihilism.

merely to what is static. . . . But just as there is identity in the world, so also there is contradiction. Such are those fugitive fluxes, as becoming, duration, life."[38] And as, according to the new philosophy, the fundamental reality is becoming, it follows rigorously that contradiction is at the root of everything. We have seen, as a result of Hegelianism, an idealistic Hegelian party of the right and a materialistic Hegelian party of the left, that of Feuerbach; thus, as a result of Bergsonism, we have seen a Christian party of the right in the modernist sense, and a revolutionary party of the left.[39]

Both are the legitimate outcome of the system which identifies contraries; and for which everything vanishes in the fugitive duration of becoming, in the poorest of realities: the *instant* that is evanescent as soon as it has appeared. The instant which is the consummation of instability has taken the place of God who is pre-eminently the immutable Being. The present which passes away, the *fleeting now,* which Aristotle spoke of,[40] has taken the place of the *stable now* of eternity.[41]

[38] *Revue de métaphysique et de morale,* 1905, pp. 200, 204.

[39] Consult the articles by the Bergsonian John Weber in the *Revue de métaphysique et de morale,* 1894, pp. 549–560: "Confronted with these morals of ideas, we outline the morality, or, more correctly, the *unmorality of the act.* We call 'good' whatever has triumphed. Success, provided it is fierce and implacable, provided the vanquished are completely defeated, destroyed, abolished beyond hope, justifies everything."

[40] Aristotle, *Physics,* Bk. IV, ch. xi. Commentary of St. Thomas, lect. 18, n. 5.

[41] "Immanence and transcendence are no longer contradictories," wrote Le Roy in 1907; "they correspond to two distinct moments of duration, namely, *immanence to what has become, transcendence to what is becoming.* If we declare that God is immanent, it is because we know what He has become in us and in the world; but for the world and for us He always remains an infinite in the becoming, an infinite which will be creation in the strict acceptation of the term, not mere development, and from this point of view, God appears as transcendent" (*Revue de métaphysique et de morale,* 1907, p. 512). But between what has become and has already passed, and the becoming which does not yet exist, what is there, if God is not a substance, a pure act, but, as Bergson will have it, "a reality in the making . . . a continuous projection"? (*Creative Evolution,* p. 270). There is nothing left but the *fleeting now,* the instant which passes away, which is evanescent as soon as it has appeared. God will always, in a way, be becoming without ever existing.

It is not well enough understood that Bergsonism would give rise to far greater trouble than what it has already caused, if, without changing its fundamental principles, it claimed to safeguard the existence of God and provide us, like Hegelianism, with an interpretation of Christian dogmas.

To go to the root of things, and without being in the least concerned with the intentions of the philosophers so often unconscious of the consequences of their system, we might say that the evil genius, which Descartes distrusted, has made sport of modern thought. It alone seems to have been able to lead it to this magic sophistry which concludes that *truth is false,* that everything is confounded and destroyed in *becoming.* It alone, one would say, has been able to conceive the hidden meaning of this burlesque imitation of God and give to this sacrilegious irony just enough gravity for it to be taken seriously, enough dazzling falsehood and seduction so as to make a flower of evil, and of all flowers the most dangerous. He who wishes to pluck it will be overcome by dizziness at the brink of the abyss and hurled into doctrinal and moral nihilism of the most absolute type. "His eyes shall be opened, and he shall be like God, knowing good and evil."

There is nothing strained about these reflections; on the contrary, they are very simple from the true point of view, which is that of the supernatural law.[42] One may read the chapters of the Vatican Council referring to the progressive inroads made by Naturalism "which works with the utmost zeal (*summo studio*

Dumesnil, in his sensible study of *Contemporary Sophistry,* rightly ridicules Bergsonism. He points out particularly that Bergson suppresses the mystery of creation, and that his God is the Unconscious of the post-Kantian philosophers. Bishop Farge, in his recent book on the *Philosophy of Bergson,* clearly sets forth the same conclusions, that the new metaphysics is the negation of being, truth, the principle of identity or of contradiction, of causality, of the real multiplicity of beings and of the primacy of reason.

[42] Cf. Maritain, art. "L'Esprit de la philosophie moderne," in the *Revue de philosophie,* June 1914.

molitur) to deny the true God and His Christ, to exclude the same from the minds of men, and from the life and moral acts of nations, so that the reign of what they call pure reason or nature may be established." [43] Who is farther from God, the murderer misled by his passion or the cold and conscious defender of the negative philosophy attacked by the Council?

St. Thomas (IIa IIae, q. 154, a. 12) says: "In every genus, worst of all is the corruption of the principle on which the rest depend. . . . Wherefore, just as in speculative matters the most grievous and shameful error is that which is about things the knowledge of which is naturally bestowed on man, so in matters of action it is most grave and shameful to act against things as determined by nature."

71) *Conclusion: the true God or radical absurdity.*

By a strange coincidence, the prodigious effort that the Separatist philosophy makes to deny God, ends merely in a *reductio ad absurdum* demonstration of His existence and of the mysterious harmony found in Him. We must choose one of the two: either the ineffable essence which identifies in itself all the absolute perfections and, far from destroying them, raises them to their highest degree, or else the universal confusion and destruction of all forms of truth and goodness in an absurd identification with error and evil.

Take the properties of being, expressed by the primary notions; you will find them all brought to their highest perfection in the Christian philosophy; on the contrary, it is the privation of these that characterizes the philosophy of becoming.

Christian philosophy is the philosophy of the one who is the Being, harmonious Unity, the very Truth, Goodness inspiring and commanding our love, Beauty which is the splendor of being, unity, truth, and goodness combined.

[43] Constitution *Dei Filius*, and Vacant, *Etudes sur le Concile*, I, 111.

The philosophy of becoming is the nihilist philosophy of non-being (of that which is becoming and as yet does not exist), of the phenomenon, of confused multiplicity, of seeming falsehood or apparent truth, of the systematic mediocre which is the subtlest of evil, and therefore of ugliness, so we must say, in spite of the seductions with which it surrounds itself.

The philosophy of becoming must of necessity deny the first principles of reason and of being, in affirming that nothing exists and that everything is becoming. The principle of causality is violated: for the greater comes from the less, in the ascendent order of evolution; the conscious comes uncaused from the unconscious; morality rises above animality without any foundation for it. The principle of finality is destroyed; in the process of evolution it has been impossible to ordain the lower forms of life to the higher, since there has not been from all eternity a designing intelligence. The principle of change, that every change presupposes a subject, is itself rejected, since becoming conceived as an absolute exists without anything that is becoming, like a flux without a fluid, a river without water, a flight without a bird. The principle of substance vanishes; there is nothing left but phenomena, appearance without anything that can appear; there is no longer a formal principle of anything; all natures, whether lower or higher, are identified; the nature of God and that of the stone are but one in becoming. Of the stone it is true to say what the Church says of sanctifying grace, that it is a participation of the divine nature, nay rather, that it is God who is becoming in the same. The four causes of becoming have disappeared; becoming remains, they tell us, without a subject, without a formal principle to specify it, without an agent to produce it, without an end for it to tend toward. What becomes of the more general principle of sufficient reason? It disappears: becoming, which is not of itself, has no *raison d'être;* the contingent is the absolute. The principle of identity or of contradiction resolves itself into uni-

versal mobility; no longer may we say: flesh is flesh, spirit is spirit; but we must say: spirit is flesh, or flesh is spirit. God is the creature, the creature is God. As being disappears in the flux of all things, there is no longer any distinction between truth and falsehood, between good and evil. By its evolution, absolute Rationalism has proved its own irrationalism. It is the destruction of reason.

Between the philosophy of being and that of becoming, there can be no remaining neutral as Agnosticism would have it. If Absolute Evolutionism denies the real validity of the principle of contradiction, Agnosticism must at least bring it in question; and this is what it does when it declares the existence of God to be uncertain. If the existence of the first uncaused cause is doubtful, the principle of causality becomes doubtful and consequently also that of contradiction.[44] The Agnostic asks at times: What may be an *uncaused cause?* As if the union of these two terms implied a contradiction. An *uncaused effect* is what is manifestly repugnant. But if the existence of an uncaused cause is declared doubtful, it follows that the world has perhaps originated from nothingness without any cause, that at every moment, perhaps, the greater comes from the less. We have already seen that it is absurd to question the impossibility of the absurd. Consequently the Unknowable of Agnosticism is contradictory like the Inconceivable of absolute Evolutionism. It is perhaps both existent and nonexistent, body and spirit, good and bad, effect and first cause, the means and the ultimate end, etc.

From this Evolutionist or Agnostic point of view, what becomes of the love of truth? At the start it seemed urged on even to scrupulousness, in the determination of the method; at the end, the words "integrity" and "lying" no longer have any precise significance. There are no longer any lies, but merely successive opinions. Hence submission to the decisions of the Church takes on a new

[44] Cf. *supra*, n. 24.

meaning. The submission is merely outward, and the same opinions continue to be held. If there are any things which must be revised, these are the definitions of the Councils which, as Guenther said, could have only a provisory validity, relative to the state of knowledge at the moment when they were formulated.

What influence may such a philosophy have upon religion? The history of Liberal Protestantism and of Modernism shows us. Such a philosophy finally makes a living contradiction of religion, an Atheistic religion. Whereas within the fold of the Church there is peace, and without there is war against the enemies of the faith, Relativism establishes peace without, and there are no longer any enemies of the faith, and it introduces unrest and division within the Church. It destroys real fervor, which it sometimes replaces by a frigid correctness, always by indifference to divine truth, by the cult of public opinion from which favors are sought. The calm of contemplation is succeeded by anxiety and novelty, by a fever of the mind, "a clumsy and carnal curiosity" (the *carnal wisdom* that St. Paul has in mind).[45] Religion becomes essentially a thing of time; it is unmindful of eternal life, the glory of God, souls and their deep needs, and is concerned with nothing but the contemporary movement which is made the criterion for the things of eternity. The most useful abettors of absolute Rationalism are misguided persons who allow themselves insensibly to be imbued by this spirit without always being clearly conscious of it, and they are the recipients of its praises. Deaf to all salutary warnings, they interpret the supernatural mysteries in a thoroughly natural manner; they falsify the formal object of the science of faith, labor to bring about the worst confusion—that between nature and grace, God and the world—and are already preaching that false mysticism the very essence of which is this confusion. Now the false mysticism of the present day no longer absorbs all things in God, but it absorbs God in the constantly evolving

[45] See II Cor. 1: 12, St. Thomas' commentary.

world, and in this way it leads to Atheism. This is clearly stated in the Encyclical of 1907 (Denzinger, nn. 2073 ff. and 2081). For the statement of this judgment, all the Encyclical needs to do is to consider things from the fundamental point of view of metaphysics and theology.

We should not be surprised at the severity of the Church against those who claim to reconcile the spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ with that of the Reformation and the French Revolution, in virtue of the principles of the philosophy of becoming. The burden of the refrain about the future city is merely the confusion of the two radically distinct cities of which St. Augustine said: "For the time being they are intermingled; at the end they will be separated, and are already so at heart." A serious study of Pius IX's Syllabus and that of Pius X suffices to show how empty are all these dreams of universal peace which are oblivious to the fact of the absolute and eternal opposition between good and evil, and which end only in universal mediocrity and lethargic indifference.

The principle of identity or of contradiction tells us that there are things impossible of reconciliation, that of the absolute perfections and their contraries: good is good, evil is evil. *"Est est; non non;* yea, yea; no, no," said our Lord (Matt. 5:37). But the principle obliges us to affirm the identification in God and in Him alone of all the absolute perfections, however different they may appear to be. Simplicity in the highest degree is rich with the multiplicity of pure perfections present there formally and eminently. The absolute immutable being is not inert, He is life itself, without either beginning or end. The absolutely simple Being knows Himself formally and knows everything in Himself, without this knowledge destroying His unity in the least. The infinitely wise Being has very wisely His own preferences and good pleasure, the reason for which is in Himself. The perfectly immutable Being was free to create or not to create, and by this

free act there is no addition in Him of anything contingent and defectible; it is the dominating indifference of His love of pure Act with regard to created things. The infinitely good and powerful Being has permitted evil and from it He effects a greater good. Most compassionate mercy and most inflexible justice are identified in the same love of the sovereign Good, which communicates itself gratuitously with all the tenderness of charity and which proclaims also its inalienable right to be loved above all things.

Each of these attributes is implied in all the others and implies them. Far from being irreconcilable, they necessarily appeal to one another. In this there is no contradiction, but too much light for our feeble intelligence which remains dazzled. Truly we cannot find insoluble antinomies in God, but eminent harmony, the intimate secret of which is naturally known by Him alone.

This profound agreement between things most difficult to reconcile is realized gradually in us, by means of grace. It is one of the most characteristic signs of God's supernatural action in the soul, since it shows that in the soul there is the image of this absolute identification which is realized formally and eminently only by the Deity. But the image, like the model, is mysterious. In the soul of our Lord, victim of love for our salvation, mercy and justice have met, and this meeting is a mystery to us, the mystery of our redemption. Thus in the life of the Church and in every Christian soul, this divine harmony keeps its secret, since it is entirely supernatural.

There is enough obscurity so that we are not tempted to bring God down to our level and imagine Him to be like us, as anthropomorphism does. The divine essence is ineffable; the saints, the more they advance in sanctity, vie with one another in repeating this name. But this name is not uttered by them in the same sense as by the Agnostics; for them and even for us there is enough light in the darkness of the mind for us to be able with

absolute certainty to recognize the existence of the true God, His attributes, and His action.

Without perceiving Him *as He is in Himself,* we truly see *God Himself* by our mental act. We can truly say that we know our friends intimately, though we do not enter into their feelings as they are in themselves.

Moreover, in these days of Agnosticism we cannot too often repeat that, in a sense, we have a much more certain knowledge of God than of men with whom we live most intimately. The man who offers to shake hands with us perhaps decides at the same moment to betray us; perhaps his gesture is a lie; I may doubt his word, his virtue, his goodness. On the contrary, I know with absolute certainty, even by reason alone, that God cannot lie, that He is infinitely good, just, and holy. Of all beings it is He, in a sense, whom I know best when I recite the *Our Father* and meditate upon its words, just as I am known best by Him. We know God, in a sense, much better than we do our own heart; we are sure of the purity of his intentions, but we are not absolutely sure of ours.

Lastly, in a sense, we know the divine nature better than we do human nature, and especially better than we know the lower natures of the vegetable and animal kingdoms. After intensively studying St. Thomas' treatise on God and meditating on it, we see our way clear to connect all the divine attributes with the *self-subsisting Being,* and to show the solidarity of all the theses with this fundamental principle: "In God alone essence and existence are identical." It would certainly be more difficult to connect the whole treatise on man with the definition of reason. There is, indeed, the material element in man; and matter, in a sense, is repugnant to intelligibility; it constitutes the outer fringe of being and consequently of the intelligible.

Thus we come back to a profound remark made by Aristotle (*Met.,* Bk. I, ch. i): "The supreme Cause is more knowable and intelligible *in itself* than all other causes, although *relatively* to us

it is more difficult to know, because it is more distant from our senses." Matter of itself is obscure, God is light; time is more obscure than eternity; it is so *of itself* and not merely for us.

We have been created and placed in the world precisely to know, love, and serve this infinite God whose light dazzles our feeble sight. We must love Him more than ourselves and above all things because we are sure He is the sovereign Good, infinitely better than we are. In Him there is no trace of imperfection, instability, or impurity, because He is Being itself without any admixture of non-being. He is the beneficent source of all being, life, knowledge, of all reality and goodness there is in our desires and wills. He cannot be the principle of error or of evil. Our deficiencies require only a deficient cause, which is ourselves. God, who unceasingly raises us up and sanctifies us, is thus Sanctity itself; in Him all the absolute perfections are identical with His essence, without any trace of imperfection. Since He is the beginning and end of all things, all glory must be traced back to Him.

Every intellect and every will must turn toward God, submit humbly to Him, let themselves be enlightened and drawn by Him. "It is time to become humble, for it is time to become proud." Let us ask God's help that we may have the strength to raise ourselves toward Him. There is nothing greater than a saint kneeling and humbling himself. That we may never stoop to manifest evil and hypocrisy, we must form the habit of bowing profoundly before God and before whatever is divine in all souls. Respect for all opinions, however false or perverse they may be, is only the proud denial of respect due to the Truth. Sincerely to love the true and the good, we must have no sympathy with error and evil. Truly to love the sinner and further his salvation, we must detest the evil in him.

The obscurity of the mystery of God is dispelled in proportion as a sincere soul grows in charity. To understand somewhat and experience the mystery of the divine action in the world and in

created liberties, we must let ourselves be directed by it, let the bandage of pride covering the eyes of the mind be removed by it; above all we must let ourselves be drawn and loved by God. Only valiant souls allow themselves to be influenced by divine love in their labors, like marble in the hands of a sculptor, until God reproduces His own traits in them. The love of God for us does not presuppose lovableness in us; it gives us this in vivifying us. But it does not make us participate in the intimacy of the divine life except by purifying us, and this purification is the more painful as the soul, in following the Crucified, is predestined to mount higher. In the instability, obscurity, and death of the passing time, the divine action leads us lovingly toward the light of life of motionless eternity. Sweetly and firmly it inclines us to seek our eternal happiness and still more the glory of Him who is. "Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to Thy name give glory" (Ps. 115: 1).

In conclusion, with the great St. Augustine whom we might well have quoted more abundantly in this work, let us contemplate the infinite perfection of God. We are reminded of the opening words of the *Confessions* (Bk. I, chs. i and iv): "Thou hast created us for Thyself, and our heart is restless until it repose in Thee. . . . What art Thou, then, my God? . . . *For who is Lord but the Lord.* Most high, most good, most potent, most omnipotent; most merciful, yet most just; most hidden, yet most present; most beautiful, yet most strong; stable, yet incomprehensible; unchangeable, yet all-changing; never new, never old; all-renewing, and bringing age upon the proud, and they know it not; ever working, ever at rest; still gathering, yet nothing lacking; supporting, filling, and overspreading: Thou hast created us anew in withdrawing us from the nothingness of our sin, nourishing us with Thy word and increasing in us Thy grace. It is Thou who dost seek us when we are lost, as if Thou hadst need of finding us again. Thou lovest, without passion; art jealous, without anxi-

ety; we speak of Thy anger, but nothing is more serene than the decrees of Thy justice. Thou changest Thy works, Thy purpose unchanged. Thou receivest again what Thou findest, yet didst never lose; never in need, yet rejoicing in gains; never covetous, yet exacting usury. Thou receivest over and above, that Thou mayest owe; and who hath aught that is not thine? Thou payest debts, owing nothing; remittest debts, losing nothing. And what have I now said, my God, my life, my holy joy? or what saith any man when he speaks of Thee? Yet woe to him that speaketh not of Thee!"

The *Confessions* ends as it began: "We see things because they are; but they are, because Thou seest them . . . and Thou seest them in Thyself. . . . We oscillate between good and evil, whereas Thou art the sovereign goodness. . . . By Thy grace we perform some good works in our journey through life and, at its end, we hope to enjoy perfect rest in Thy ineffable hallowing. But Thou, being the Good which needeth no good, art ever at rest, because Thy rest is Thou Thyself. And what man can teach man to understand this? or what angel, an angel? or what angel, a man? Let it be asked of Thee, sought in Thee, knocked for at Thee; so, so shall it be received, so shall it be found, so shall it be opened. Amen."

Blessed are the souls that have heard from God these three words which effect what they signify: "Come, enter, abide." *"Blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it"* (Luke 11:28). *"God is charity, and He that abideth in charity abideth in God, and God in him"* (I John 4:16). "To Him be glory both now and unto the day of eternity. Amen" (II Peter 3:18).

APPENDIX I

Note on the Validity of the Principles of Inertia and Conservation of Energy

We have spoken on several occasions (Vol. I, pp. 259–260; 270–278; 282) of these two principles and of the problem of their reconciliation with the principle of causality.

According to the principle of causality, there is no change without a cause; hence a cause is required as much for the change which takes place in the course of motion as for the transition from rest to motion itself. If it were otherwise, *a finite and minimum impulsion* could produce in the void a perpetual motion in which there would always be something new, a perpetual transition from potentiality to act; a finite power could forever be in motion, a snap of the finger ten thousand years ago would still produce its effect today, and would produce it always, eternally. This motion, which would have no need of being kept up, would have neither end nor beginning in the metaphysical sense of the terms. Would it not be contrary to the principles of causality and finality?

The principle of inertia is expressed as follows: of itself matter cannot set itself in motion or modify the motion that it has; a body in motion, if no external cause acts upon it, retains a rectilineal and uniform motion indefinitely.

If anyone objects that the facts seem to contradict the principle of inertia—*v. g.*, that a billiard ball, shot on a very smooth plane, stops at the end of a certain time; that a train, after acquiring its normal speed, stops if the steam is not made to act on the pistons—the physicist replies that this stopping is due to the friction of the billiard ball on the plane, or to that of the wheels on the rails, and also to the resistance of the air.

Is it a demonstrated fact that this friction and this resistance are the only causes of the stopping? Is it scientifically proved that the given motion does not slow down also of itself? "Has it ever been proved

from experiments with bodies removed from the influence of all external force," asks H. Poincaré [1] "that these bodies are not influenced by any force?" How, without exceeding the limits of his science, can the physicist maintain that the *divine motion is not necessary* for a body hurled into a void to move eternally?

The principle of the conservation of energy is expressed as follows: "In a system of bodies removed from all external influence, the total energy (actual and potential) of this system remains constant." This principle is necessarily connected with the preceding, and it is tantamount to saying that it is impossible for motion ever to cease; if it disappears under one form it reappears under another; thus the motion of a projectile ceases only in generating heat, and heat itself produces local motion. The equivalence is established by reason of the corrective administered to it by the law of the diminution of energy.

Does it follow that a given snap of the finger made a thousand years ago has still its effect today because of the transformations of energy, and that it will always be so, without any need for the energy to be *renewed?* Is it enough to admit that this energy is *conserved* by God, as Descartes says, and that the divine *motion* was only exerted in the past, in the beginning of the world? How, without exceeding the limits of his science, can the physicist declare that the *divine motion is not necessary* for the perpetual transformation of energy? It is clear that energy is not *individually* the same; it is not the *same* motion that passes from one body into another, for it is *this* motion, because it is the motion of *this* body. Likewse, human activity is relatively constant on the surface of the earth, and yet it is not individually the same; it is renewed, since human beings are born and die. Long ago Aristotle said: *The corruption of one is the generation of another;* matter loses one form only to receive another; and this can be expressed in modern terms with regard to energy by saying that a form of energy does not disappear without another appearing. Does it follow that the form which disappears is the first and all-sufficient cause of the one succeeding it? By no means; experimental science, which studies only the constant relations between phenomena, cannot declare itself either for or against the necessity for the intervention of a first invisible Cause for the transformation of energy. But, from the metaphysical point of view, one motion does not give rise to another

[1] *La science et l'hypothèse,* pp. 112–119.

except with the invisible concurrence of the First Being, who is the cause of all being as such, of the Prime Mover who is the supreme cause of the activity of secondary causes. Likewise, from the metaphysical point of view, a local motion cannot be perpetuated in a void, cannot be a *perpetual transition from potency to act,* without the invisible intervention of the pure Act, the supreme cause of all actualization. To maintain with Descartes that for this, it is sufficient that God *conserve* the motion, we must understand by this expression that God continues to move.

Thus only can the mechanical principles of inertia and conservation of energy be reconciled with the metaphysical principle of causality. Every other reconciliation, which rejects the necessity of the intervention of the first cause, is illusive.[2]

It is not for the physicist to solve this problem; he cannot pronounce finally on the validity of the solution given by the metaphysics of the Schools; he must merely recognize that this solution is in no way opposed to what physics has the right to affirm about the validity of its principles in the phenomenal order.

On this point it gives us pleasure to publish a letter from Pierre Duhem, of the Academy of Sciences, in which he gives us a summary of the main ideas of his fine work, *La Théorie physique.*[3]

The letter reads as follows:

"Dear Father: I owe you some explanations for certain ambiguous terms in my previous letter and especially for the name *'axiom'* or *'so-called axiom'* which I gave to the principle of inertia.

"I begin by stating precisely that I shall take the words mathematics, physics, and metaphysics according to the meaning generally given them by our contemporaries, not according to the meaning given them by Aristotle and the Scholastics.

"In these circumstances, the law of inertia does not exist for the mathematician; the principles of the science of numbers and of geometry are the only ones that he has to admit; he is not concerned with the principles of mechanics and physics; if he happens to study the problems presented to him by the mechanist and the physicist, he does so regardless of the way by which they have been led to formulate these problems.

[2] The reconciliation of the principle of inertia with the law of universal attraction would have to be studied from the same point of view.

[3] *La Théorie physique, son object et sa structure.*

"I consider, therefore, the principle of inertia only as it is for the physicist.

"One may say of it, then, what may be said of all principles of the mechanical and physical theories. These fundamental principles or *hypotheses* (in the etymological sense of the word) are not *axioms,* self-evident truths. Nor are they *laws,* that is, general propositions reached directly by induction from the teachings of experience.

"It may be that certain rational probabilities or certain facts of experience *suggest* them to us; but this suggestion is in no way a *demonstration;* it does not confer on them, of itself, any certitude. *From the point of view of pure logic,* the fundamental principles of the theories of mechanics and physics can be looked upon only as *postulates freely posited by the mind.*

"From the ensemble of these postulates, deductive reasoning deduces an ensemble of more or less remote consequences which agree with the perceived phenomena; *this agreement is all that the physicist expects* from his *postulated principles.*

"This agreement confers a certain probability upon the fundamental principles of the theory. But it can never confer certitude on them, for it can never be demonstrated that, if other postulates were taken as principles, consequences would not be deduced which would agree just as well with the facts.

"Besides, it can never be affirmed that some day new facts will not be discovered which no longer agree with the consequences of the postulates that had been posited as being at the basis of the theory: new facts compelling us to deduce a new theory from new postulates. This change of postulates has been effected many a time in the course of the development of science.

"From these considerations two consequences follow: (1) *We shall never have the right to affirm categorically of any one of the principles of the mechanical and physical theory, that it is true.* (2) *We are not allowed to affirm of any one of the principles on which the mechanical and physical theory rests, that it is false, so long as there has been no discovery of phenomena that disagree with the consequences of the deduction of which this principle constitutes one of the premises.*

"What I have just said applies particularly to the principle of inertia. *The physicist has not the right to say it is certainly true;* but still less has he the right to say it is false, since we have so far met

with no phenomenon (if we leave out of consideration the circumstances in which the *free will* of man intervenes) that compels us to construe a physical theory from which this principle would be excluded.

"All this is said without going beyond the domain of the *physicist,* for whom the principles are not affirmations of real properties of the bodies, but premises of deductions the consequences of which must be in agreement with the phenomena every time that a free will does not intervene to disarrange the determinism of the latter.

"To these principles of physics, can we and must we make certain propositions correspond which would affirm certain real properties of bodies? To the law of inertia, for instance, must we make the affirmation correspond that there is, in every body in motion, a certain reality, an *impetus,* endowed with such or such characteristics? Do these propositions apply or not to other beings endowed with free will? These are problems that the method of the physicist is incapable of grappling with and it leaves them to the free discussion of the metaphysicians.

"There is only one case which would induce the physicist to be opposed to this liberty of the metaphysician. It is that in which the metaphysician would formulate a proposition directly contradicting the phenomena or a proposition which, introduced in virtue of a principle in the physical theory, would lead to consequences in contradiction to the phenomena. In this case, there would be just grounds for denying the metaphysician the right to formulate such a proposition.

"Now you have, Reverend Father, the summary of what I would say if I were ever to write, concerning the principle of inertia, the article that you so kindly wish me to write.

P. Duhem."

N.B. Conclusions more or less like those of Duhem are expressed by E. Meyerson. In his *Identité et réalité* (1908), he examines, from the point of view of experience and of philosophic reason, the validity of the principles of inertia and of conservation of energy. The author goes so far as to say, what seems to us quite right, that "the principle of inertia demands that we view *motion as a state;* if motion is a state, it must maintain itself like every state. . . . The principle of inertia demands that we view *speed as a substance.* Now this is an entirely paradoxical concept for the immediate understanding" (pp. 132, 134).

Professor Gustavo Pécsi, in his *Crisi degli assiomi della Fisica Moderna,* translated from the German (1910), goes further still and believes he can prove absolutely the falsity of the principle of inertia which would end in this contradiction: that motion is essentially motionless, that there is nothing new in it (p. 201).

APPENDIX II

Note on the Simplicity of the Analogical Notion of Being

We have shown on various occasions (especially *supra,* pp. 214–220) that the concept of being does not possess absolute unity, but only a *unity of proportionality,* because what it designates is not absolutely the same, but *proportionately alike* in the necessary being and the contingent substantial being and the diverse accidents of this latter. When we define being in general as "that which is or can be," or more precisely as "that the act of which is to exist, *id cujus actus est esse,*" even then this relation to existence, being *essentially varied,* cannot be thought of without at least a confused thought of the members of the proportionality in which it is realized. God is to His necessary existence as created substance is to its contingent existence, as accident is to its existence which is dependent on a subject.

How then can we maintain what we have already said (Vol. I, p. 140, n. 19), namely, that the notion of being is *the simplest of all* notions, and therefore it cannot be a false expression of the real or be the reunion of incompossible elements?

The reconciliation of these two theses, already referred to (p. 214), is not so difficult as at first it appears to be.

We must first of all distinguish between *two simplicities,* the one positive, the other negative, which are in opposition to each other as *perfect and imperfect.* These are the simplicity of God, pure Act, and the simplicity of prime matter, which is *not composed* of distinct elements but which is susceptible of receiving every form and constituting all bodies. The simplicity of the general notion of being approaches this latter, because this notion is *not composed* of other ideas; but, since it has to be predicated of the *most diverse* kinds of beings, it cannot denote in them something absolutely similar, but only proportionately so.

The idea of being is the *simplest* of all ideas, because it does not presuppose any other and is *not composed* of previous notions; on the

contrary, it enters into the constitution or comprehension of all other ideas, into that of truth, goodness, beauty, substance, cause, humanity, etc. The idea of humanity, for instance, is *composed* of the ideas of animality and rationality; it is really and truly by this genus and specific difference that man is defined, whereas being in general cannot be defined in this way. It transcends (*transcendit*) all the genera and the *differentiae,* and that is why it is called a transcendental notion. The comprehension of this latter is all the more *simple* and restricted as it is the more universal in its extension. That it may be applied to all beings the most diverse, from the accidents of a grain of dust up to God, this idea must denote the *minimum* that they have in common.

Now, it is precisely this minimum, signified by the notion of being in general, that is not found in all of them in the same way, but according to modes which are *proportionately* alike. God *is* of Himself; the grain of dust *is,* not of itself but in itself; such of its qualities *is,* not of itself, nor in itself, but in it. Being as such is therefore *essentially varied or analogical;* it cannot be *perfectly* abstracted from its analogues; in other words, we cannot think of being without thinking confusedly of the diverse members of the proportionality, of necessary being, contingent being, the accidental modalities of the latter. On the contrary, an idea which is not analogical but univocal, like that of humanity, expresses a characteristic which is specifically the same in all men and which can be thought of entirely apart from them.

There is then no contradiction in saying that the idea of being is the *simplest* of all *ideas* and that it has, nevertheless, only a *unity of proportionality;* moreover, the second assertion is derived from the first.

To sum up: The simplest idea is that which is *not composed* of previous notions; there cannot, therefore, be any accidental error in its formation; it cannot be a false expression of the real.[1]

Moreover, from the mere fact that the notion of being is the sim-

[1] See St. Thomas, Ia, q. 85, a. 6: "Whether the intellect can be false." "*Concerning the quiddity of a thing, the intellect, properly speaking, is not at fault.* . . . The intellect, however, may be *accidentally* deceived in the quiddity *of composite things* (on the part of the composition affecting the definition). . . . *As regards simple objects* not subject to composite definitions, *we cannot be deceived* unless, indeed, we understand nothing whatever about them, as is said in *Metaph.*, IX, ch. x (lect. 11)."

plest and the least comprehensive, it must have the widest extension. Now it cannot be extended to beings the most different and infinitely diverse, denoting in them an absolutely identical formality, but merely that in which they are *proportionately alike.*

We must say as much of the notion of *unity.* It, too, is analogical, and can denote only a similarity of proportion, as that which exists between such diverse unities as those of God, the human soul, the *negative* unity of matter, the accidental unity of a heap of stones, or, in the abstract sense, between the unities of a species, a genus, an analogical notion.

This is Cajetan's profound statement in the passages we have already quoted (p. 214), *De analogia nominum,* ch. vi: "The analogue, as previously stated, is predicated of the analogates, and is not only in name common to them, but is proportionally so in the uniqueness of its concept . . . it is *one not accidentally,* or *by aggregation,* as a heap of stones, but it is directly evident that the analogue is also proportionally one." Likewise, in his *De conceptu entis,* he says: "That being is also the *simplest of concepts* agrees with what has been said, for since *simplicity is opposed to composition,* also that which is one by analogy is not one by any composition."

For a right understanding of this, we must remember that there are two kinds of simplicity: that of the idea of being in general is not the simplicity that belongs to God; they are opposed to each other as are the imperfect and sovereign perfection, as are the simplicity of the idiot and that of the divine intellect. The simplicity of the divine nature is *the most absolute unity,* so eminent that it subsists even in the Trinity of Persons. On the other hand, the simplicity of the general notion of being, though excluding all composition, denotes in the different beings but a *unity of proportionality,* and that is what is meant when we say that it is an analogical notion. It is the characteristic of Pantheism to confound these two unities that are so different, one of them representing the starting-point of our intellectual knowledge, and the other its culmination which is the object of the beatific vision.

APPENDIX III

The Various Forms of Pantheism Refuted by St. Thomas

As previously stated by us (Vol. I, pp. 244–245), some Modernists have held that St. Thomas did not refute Pantheism. It would seem that he did not know or chose to ignore it. Certain theologians, on the contrary, have maintained that Thomism exaggerates the divine universal causality to such an extent that it tends toward Occasionalism, that system according to which God alone acts. This ought to lead one to affirm that "God alone exists," for action follows being, *operari sequitur esse.*

In this appendix we will examine briefly: (1) What forms of Pantheism were known to St. Thomas; (2) Where and how he refuted them; (3) How the truth, that Pantheism distorts, is contained in the Thomist doctrine of the divine causality.

I. *What forms of Pantheism were known to St. Thomas.*

We have previously pointed out (I, 244 f.) that St. Thomas knew, through Aristotle, the two opposite types of ancient Pantheism: that of *Parmenides* which absorbs becoming and the multiple in the sole and motionless Being (Acosmism), and that of *Heraclitus* which absorbs being in becoming, and must end in Atheistic Evolutionism.

Besides, he knew, at least from St. Augustine and Dionysius, the Pantheism of the *Stoics,* according to which God is the soul of the world and like an intellectual fire in constant evolution. This doctrine was revived by Heraclitus. From the same source, St. Thomas knew the Emanatistic Pantheism of *Plotinus* and the *Neoplatonists,* which reminds one more of the doctrine of Parmenides about the One.

Finally St. Thomas could not have been ignorant of the different types of medieval Pantheism: that of *Amalric of Bena,* according to which God is the formal principle of all things: the materialistic Pantheism of *David of Dinant;* and the *Averroistic doctrine* of a single intellect for all men.

Moreover, St. Thomas has classified these different types of Pantheism, adopting the well-known Aristotelian terminology of the four causes. This classification is found in the *Theological Summa,* Ia, q. 3, a. 8: "Whether God enters into the composition of other things." It is completed in Ia, q. 19, a. 4: "Whether the will of God is the cause of things, or whether He acts by a necessity of His nature or knowledge." (See the references to the other works of St. Thomas, indicated in these two articles.)

The division amounts to this: (1) For certain Pantheists, *God is the form or soul of the world,* at the very least, of the highest heaven. Such is the teaching of the Stoics and of Amalric of Bena, according to whom God is the formal principle of all things. (2) For others, *God is the matter of the world;* "so David of Dinant, who most absurdly taught that God was primary matter" (Ia, q. 3, a. 8). This is a return to the earliest period of philosophy, to the doctrine of the first Ionian philosophers, to Thales, Anaximenes, Anaximander. (3) For others, God is the *efficient cause of the world,* but He produces it by a *necessity of His nature* or *intellect* (*necessitas scientiae*), so that He would be neither good nor wise if He did not do so. Thus do all those speak who, like the Averroists, deny creation, especially an absolutely free creation, and who admit a certain emanation.

The Pantheistic doctrines known to St. Thomas conceive God, therefore, as the substantial form of the world or as its matter or as its necessary or non-free efficient cause.

We may point out that the modern types of Pantheism can easily be reduced to those of ancient times. In fact, according to the modern Pantheists, either *God becomes the world* (the doctrine of Spinoza and Schelling, which recalls that of the Neoplatonists and Parmenidies), or else *the world becomes God,* by an ascendent process of evolution, conceived either from the idealistic (Hegel), or the materialistic point of view (Haeckel), which reminds us of Heraclitus and the Stoics.

There is always a revival of the two opposite types of ancient Pantheism: (1) God absorbs the world, which is the Acosmism of Parmenides; (2) the world in evolution absorbs God, which is the Atheistic Evolutionism of Heraclitus. From this we see that Pantheism is so absurd that it cannot give us a definition of itself. It tends necessarily either to the denial of God or of the world; so evident is this, that God and the world cannot be one and the same reality.

II. *Where and how St. Thomas refuted these different types of Pantheism.*

It is found: (1) in his *Commentaries on the Physics and Metaphysics of Aristotle,* who himself refutes Heraclitus and Parmenides by the division of being into potentiality and act and by the principle of causality, that nothing can be reduced from potentiality to act except by a being already in act, and in the final analysis by the pure Act which, by its absolute simplicity and immutability, is essentially distinct from the world which itself is composite and changing. (See *Physics,* Bk. I, ch. viii, lect. 14; *Met.,* Bk. IV, ch. iii *ad fin.;* Bks. IX and XII.) (2) In his *Theological Summa,* Ia, q. 3, a. 8, in which it is shown that God is neither the form nor the matter of the world; in Ia, q. 19, a. 4, in which it is proved that God does not act externally by a necessity of His nature or of His knowledge, but by His sovereignly free will. This doctrine is especially developed when, in the *Contra Gentes,* he is refuting the Averroists. See Bk. II, ch. xxiii: "That God does not act of natural necessity;" ch. xxvi: "That the divine will is not confined to certain determined effects"; ch. xxx: "How there can be absolute necessity in created things"; ch. xxxi ff.: "That it is not necessary for creatures to have been always." See also, for the refutation of Emanatistic Pantheism, the *Theological Summa,* Ia, q. 90, a. 1: "Does the human soul come from the substance of God?" "Is there one intellect in all men?" Ia, q. 76, a. 2; and see also q. 79, a. 5, as well as the treatise entitled *De unitate intellectus,* for the refutation of Averroism.

This refutation is reduced to the following points:

1) *God is not the matter of the world;* for matter cannot be moved by itself, but only by a cause that brings it out of its inertia, and, in the final analysis, by a cause which is Being itself and Activity itself, the prime mover of bodies and spirits. (See the first three Thomistic proofs for the existence of God, Vol. I, pp. 261–293.)

2) *God is not the substantial form of the world,* for it would be something participated and less perfect than the composite of which it would be a part. Now everything composite requires a cause. Therefore God must be an absolutely simple cause, superior to everything composite. (See the fourth Thomistic proof for the existence of God, Vol. I, pp. 302–345.)

3) *God does not act externally by a necessity of His nature.* The

fifth Thomistic proof of His existence has already shown this. St. Thomas proves it more clearly in Ia, q. 19 a. 4. He says that every natural agent acts for an end, and needs to be directed to the end by a first intelligent cause. Therefore the first cause acts by intellect and will, and not by a necessity of nature like the plant or the animal.

Moreover, if it acted by a necessity of its nature, it would produce an effect specifically like itself, as the ox generates the ox, and the lion generates the lion. This would not explain the variety of its effects, all of which are necessarily inferior to it since there cannot be two Gods, two Infinites. (There can be only generation *ad intra* that is without multiplication of the divine nature, as revelation teaches us.)

Neither does God act by a necessity of His intellect, for there is no necessitating motive for Him that would urge Him to create: "As He is already of Himself infinite perfection and happiness, by creation He can acquire no additional perfection" (Ia, q. 19, a. 3); and, however perfect the beings may be that He has created, He can always create others more perfect (Ia, q. 25, a. 6). We have already proved this is at length (*supra* pp. 341–350).

Neither can we claim, with Spinoza, that we are only *modes* or accidents of the divine substance; for, since God is required as pure Act, He cannot be further determined and there can be no accidents in Him (Ia, q. 3, a. 6).

Finally, Pantheistic Emanation is also inadmissible; for, if we proceeded from the substance of God, He would be the material cause, and something would be transmitted from Him to us. This would presuppose a divisibility and imperfection in Him which are irreconcilable with pure Act. (Cf. Ia, q. 90, a. 1; q. 2, a. 3, fourth proof.)

We see that all these refutations of Pantheism proceed from the five Thomistic proofs for the existence of God, and they can be reduced to this proposition defined by the Vatican Council (Denzinger, n. 1782): "God, as being one, sole, *absolutely simple* and *immutable* spiritual substance, is to be declared as really and essentially distinct from the world . . . and ineffably exalted above all things."

God is really and essentially distinct from the world, for He is required as the *absolutely immutable* First Cause (first, second, and third proofs), and is *absolutely simple* (fourth and fifth proofs), whereas the world is essentially composite and changing.

Finally, if we wish to reduce this refutation of Pantheism to a

still simpler proposition, we must say that God is really and essentially distinct from the world of bodies and spirits, because in *Him alone are essence and existence identical,* because *He alone is the self-subsisting Being.* Such is the a priori reason for saying that He is sovereignly simple and immutable.

The very first truth of philosophy is the *principle of contradiction or identity: "Being is being, not-being is not-being; is means is, no means no."* The supreme truth of Christian philosophy is *the identity in God of essence and existence.* It is a truth which was revealed to Moses, when God said: *"I am who am."*

This refutation of Pantheism finds its confirmation in the deduction of the attributes of the self-subsisting Being or of pure Act. His immutability, for instance, merits the name of eternity which is "the simultaneously whole and perfect possession of interminable life, *interminabilis vitae tota simul et perfecta possessio"* (Ia, q. 10, a. 1). God possesses completely and all at once, both intellectual and volitional life which with us passes away in a succession of thoughts and volitions. He is Thought itself that is omniscient, the eternally subsisting intellectual Light and the substantial Love of the sovereign Good. All these proofs are deduced from the principle of identity which, since it is the fundamental law of being, must be verified in the most absolute and purest manner in the First Being.

III. *The truth, that Pantheism distorts, is to be found in the Thomist doctrine of Divine Causality.*

This is first of all apparent in the natural order, from the following propositions which we have already demonstrated with the help of St. Thomas:

1) *There is nothing external to God that is not, as to the whole of its being, caused by Him* (Ia, q. 45).

2) *Nothing subsists external to God that is not preserved by Him;* for being as such is the proper effect of God. Just as becoming ceases if its cause ceases to act, just as the light in the air disappears when the sun ceases to give us its light, so everything would be annihilated if the divine preservative action were to cease (Ia, q. 104).

3) *God is intimately present to all created beings by the divine action which keeps them in existence.* Now this preservative action is identical with the very essence of God which is in closest contact

with everything that is, with what is innermost in us, and that God knows infinitely better than we do ourselves (Ia, q. 8, a. 1).

4) *God operates interiorly* (*ab intus*) *in every created agent,* not so as to dispense it from acting, as the Occasionalists think, but to cause it to act, to apply it to action. "God works in every agent" (Ia, q. 105, a. 5).

5) God, as first Intellect, moves every created intellect (*ibid.*, a. 3).

6) God moves the created will, "*interius eam inclinando,* by an interior inclination of the will" (*ibid.*, a. 4). He does no violence to it; He does not force it, since He does not move it against its natural inclination, but He has given it this natural inclination for universal good; He preserves it in being and applies it to its act. Under this divine motion, the will wills the end, then moves itself, determines itself to will the means. Still it moves itself, determines itself, only as a secondary cause can so do, which is premoved by the First Cause. Thus God moves the will to universal good, then to a particular good that it deliberately chooses; or even He permits sin, and then He is the cause only of the physical entity of this act, and not of its defect, for which only a deficient cause is needed. As Bossuet says,[1] "to cause liberty of action in us, is to cause us to act freely; and to do so, is to will that it be so; for *with God, to do is to will.* . . . But He does not merely will us to have the power to be free, He wills us to be *actually free;* and He does not will that merely *in a general* way we should have the use of our freedom, but He wills that we should have the use of it *in this or that particular act.* . . . His knowledge and His will include always the least detail of things . . . that is to say what more peculiarly belongs to them, and all that is comprised in His decrees." God willed from all eternity that Paul be converted at such a time, in such circumstances, on his way to Damascus, and Paul was converted.

From all this doctrine, we see that God is Himself *immediately present* in all things (*immediatione suppositi*), by a virtual contact which is profound and hidden: "God, powerful sustainer of all things, Thou who dost remain permanently unmoved," are the words of the liturgical hymn. God, indeed, since He is a pure spirit, is not in a place by His own being, but merely by His action on bodies. He does not have to pass through space to come to us. Even when we say: "He

[1] *Traité du libre arbitre,* ch. viii.

acts externally (*ad extra*)," this expression, taken from the idea of space, is metaphorical, and signifies only that the effect produced by God is really distinct from Him, without being separated from Him by space. If God had created only the angels, there would be no location; reality as applied to pure spirits is superior to space.

Moreover, God operates *immediately* (*immediatione virtutis: by His immediate power*) in every created agent, for no active created power can pass over to act without the divine motion. This is what makes St. Thomas say (*De potentia,* q. 3, a. 7): "If we consider subsisting agencies, anyone whatsoever in particular is the immediate cause of its effect. But if we consider the power from which the action results, thus it is that the power of the higher cause will be more immediate to its effect than that of the lower; for the lower is not united with its effect except in virtue of higher; hence it is said (*De causis,* prop. 1) that *the power of the first cause acts first upon the thing caused and more vehemently controls it.*"

In the same article of the *De potentia,* St. Thomas points out in conclusion what truth is distorted by Pantheism. He says: "Thus God is the cause of every action of created agents, in so far as He gives them the power to act, maintains it in them and applies it to its act, and by His divine power every other power to act is exercized. If we add to this the fact that God is His very power—for the divine essence, His omnipotence and His action are identical—and that *He is in all things* (*intra quamlibet rem*), not as forming part of their essence, but as preserving them in being, it follows that *He Himself operates in every created agent,* even to the performance of our natural and spontaneous acts as well as to that of our free acts."

Such is the truth that Determinism and Pantheism distort. The latter conceives God as being either the material or the formal or the necessary efficient cause of the world. God is the sovereignly free and transcendent cause, but intimately present in all things by His preservative and motive action. Nothing, absolutely nothing, not even the free determination of our will, escapes God's universal causality.

It is not in *limiting the principle of causality* that we refute Determinism, which is based on this principle. It is by insisting upon the *transcendent efficacy* of the divine causality which is inferior neither to His absolute universality nor to the profundity and suavity of His action in us.

Moreover, through our elevation to the supernatural order the

intimacy of our union with God is exceedingly increased. Sanctifying grace is a participation of the divine nature, or of the intimate life of God. Already in the natural order, creatures are like to God in so far as they participate in *being, life, and intelligence;* by grace they are like to God. in so far as they participate in the *Deity,* or the intimate life of God, in that which makes God to be God (Ia IIae, q. 112, a. 1). Every soul in a state of grace is thus a spiritual temple which is the abode of the Holy Trinity, a temple that is still obscure on this earth, but one that is perfectly luminous in heaven (Ia, q. 43, a. 3).

Finally, in our Lord Jesus Christ, the union of the divine and human natures is as intimate as can be. They are united in one and the same Person, that of the Word made flesh, in such a manner that there is *only one Ego, only* one *existence* in Jesus Christ, although the two natures, the divine and the human, are, as natures, infinitely distant from each other. It is a doctrine which presupposes that there is a real distinction between created essence and existence (IIIa, q. 17, a. 2). Without any Pantheistic confusion between the divine essence and a created essence, it is the most intimate of unions, a sublime harmony between two infinitely distant extremes, that God alone was able thus to unite.

There is no doctrine that brings out more clearly than does that of St. Thomas, the infinite distinction between God and the creature, the *divine transcendence* and, what at first sight is astonishing, there is no doctrine that insists more upon *the intimacy of the divine presence in us* and of the divine influx that penetrates even to the determination of our free will.

The first of these two theses is impaired by those who, like Scotus and Suarez, reconcile by univocation the analogy of being common to God and creatures. The second is impaired by Molinism and Congruism which fear that the divine motion will destroy human liberty, if this motion profoundly and most intimately penetrates it.

For St. Thomas, on the contrary, it is precisely because the divine causality is an *absolutely transcendent* efficacy that it can attain to the *intimacy of our free will* without disturbing it. The saints understand this. One of them, perceiving how incapable he was of giving himself fully to God, said to Him: *"Lord, take me from myself and give me to Thyself."* We must say of the grace of God, what St. Paul said of His word: "The word of God is living and effectual and more piercing

than any two-edged sword and reaching unto the division of the soul and the spirit, of the joints also and the marrow; and is a discerner of the thoughts and the intents of the heart" (Heb. 4: 12). God's action in us is no less penetrating than His word and His sight, according to Isaias, 26: 12: "*Thou hast wrought all our works for us.*"

It is the purpose of the following study to demonstrate this clearly, by solving a few difficulties.

APPENDIX IV

St. Thomas and Neomolinism
A Synthesis of the Doctrine of St. Thomas on these Questions Apropos of a New Presentation of the Scientia Media

It is very difficult to treat of the question of divine causality and foreknowledge, to set forth completely St. Thomas' solution and to answer the main objections raised against it, without provoking a controversy.

The criticism of Molinism contained in the first edition of the present work was examined at length by Father d'Alès, S.J., professor of dogmatic theology at the Catholic Institute of Paris, in an article written by him concerning the *"Divine Knowledge and Decrees,"* [1] which we cannot leave unanswered.[2] This exchange of ideas is not altogether fruitless.

Father d'Alès is quite ready to approve the first part of our work almost without reserve, and it gives us pleasure to see what he has written on this subject at the beginning of his investigation. We also thank the *Civiltà Cattolica* for its flattering article which examines especially the first part of our work.[3]

But we should appear to ignore the answers and objections made by Father d'Alès, and by Father Monaco, S.J.,[4] who writes almost in the same strain, if we took no notice of them.

In treating of divine foreknowledge and motion, we had expounded

[1] *Recherches de science religieuse,* January–March, 1917, pp. 1–35.

[2] This answer has already appeared in pamphlet form under the same title as above: *S. Thomas et le Neomolinisme,* and some of it appeared in the *Recherches de science religieuse,* October–December, 1917, prompting another reply from Father d'Alès, which we shall speak about at the end.

[3] *La Civiltà cattolica,* July 5, 1919, *Intorno a Dio. Nuove pubblicazioni,* pp. 51–59.

[4] *Praelectiones metaphysicae specialis.* Part III. *Theologia naturalis,* pp. 275, 284, 393, 419, 434–439. The answers given in this work are those in vogue among the Molinists. We shall examine them again in this article.

St. Thomas' teaching as it is found in the *Theological Summa* and as it has been understood by the Dominican commentators. Our criticism of Molinism was merely a summary of that given by theologians of the Thomist School. It may be stated briefly as follows: The *scientia media* conceived by Molina, according to which *God knows infallibly, before any determining divine decree on His part, the conditional free acts of the future,*[5] (1) leads to the admission of an exception to the principle of causality and to the *universal causality* of the primary agent; being or the determination of these free acts of the future would not then come from God the first being; (2) it leads to the conclusion that the *divine knowledge is passive* with regard to these conditional free acts of the future, which determine this knowledge instead of being determined by it. The *scientia media,* thus positing a passivity in the pure Act, cannot be a pure perfection; it is a notion which attributes a human imperfection to God; (3) lastly, this theory, conceived to safeguard human liberty, must logically end in *determinism of the circumstances;* previous to any divine decree, God can infallibly foresee what would be Peter's choice if placed in certain circumstances, only if these circumstances determine the choice.[6]

Father d'Alès charges us with not knowing the Molinist doctrine we are criticizing: "The prosecution that we have just read rests solely on a complete *ignoratio elenchi* (ignoring of the point at issue)."[7]

If this be true, then for more than three centuries all the Thomists whose views we have summarized failed to understand anything of the doctrine of Molina. May it not be rather that the Molinists have distorted the doctrine of St. Thomas?

Father d'Alès concedes that "the theory of the *scientia media* has often been proposed in a form by which the adversaries triumph" and which leads to fatalism. The third part of our criticism would then be decisive against many Molinists; but these disciples would have clumsily distorted the doctrine of their master. Father d'Alès

[5] Molina, *Concordia,* q. 14, a. 13, disp. 52.

[6] This criticism of the *scientia media* has been expounded at length by all the commentators of the Thomist school who have written about the Ia, q. 14 of St. Thomas, since the appearance of Molinism. See *John of St. Thomas, the Salmanticenses, Gonet,* and others. *Billuart* has given us a summary of this criticism in his *De Deo,* diss. VI, a. 6, sec. 5, and in more succinct form in the *De gratia,* diss. V, a. 6.

[7] *Recherches,* p. 20.

proposes a new conception of the *scientia media* and invites us to a frank exchange of views, in the hope of effecting a reconciliation between the Molinists and their adversaries. A better understanding of St. Thomas would permit of this reconciliation. Let us examine then: the charges made against us; the proposed new theory; the relations between this theory and the solution of St. Thomas.

CHAPTER I

Does the Judgment Passed by the Thomists upon the Scientia Media Rest upon a Complete Ignoratio Elenchi?

Have the Thomists for three centuries been ignorant of the true point at issue? Like the inexpert Molinists just mentioned, have they distorted the doctrine of Molina? Have they themselves ceased to be Thomists, and become *Bannesians,* as Father d'Alès keeps on saying, after the manner of many of his confrères? Has the Thomist tradition been lost by the Dominicans, and preserved by the Jesuit theologians, as Father Schneemann [1] and his friends declare? Father del Prado, O.P., like many others before him, has made a thorough study of this question in his recent work *De gratia et libero arbitrio,* the third volume of which is occupied with the examination of the doctrine of Molina. Has he, then, been so blinded by Scholastic prejudices as not to recognize the essence of Molinism and the fundamental doctrine of St. Thomas on divine motion? [2]

If the Dominican theologians for three centuries have ceased to be the true disciples of St. Thomas, and have become disciples of

[1] Father G. S. Schneemann, S.J., *Controv. divin. gratiae* (1881 ed., p. 217), writes: "The followers of St. Thomas, toward the end of the sixteenth century, were divided into two camps. Bannez, to use his own words, deviated from the common opinion held by the theologians of that time, and almost at once after the appearance of his doctrine it was attacked as something *new* and *unheard of,* both by his own colleagues and others. But the theologians of the Society of Jesus, holding to and constantly explaining the *common and, I may say, ancient doctrine that has been handed down to us,* and which they learnt in the very schools of the Order of Preachers, have earnestly striven for this, if possible, that the most certain efficacy of grace, would be reconciled with liberty of action, and with the interpretation of science."

[2] Del Prado, *De gratia et libero arbitrio,* 1917, Vol. III.

Bannez,[3] how could Pope Benedict XV write, as so many of his predecessors had done, saying of the Order of St. Dominic that: "this Order must be praised not so much for having reared the Angelic Doctor, but for *never afterwards departing in the least from his teaching*"? [4] If an illuminating grace is needed that one may properly understand St. Thomas, is it not above all to the religious family of the great Doctor that the Lord deigns to grant and preserve so precious a gift, although He grants it also to all those who ask it from the depth of their hearts?

What have we misunderstood in the essence of Molinism? We have repeatedly and attentively read Father d'Alès' view on this question. The texts of Molina to which he draws our attention, were known to us; they are commonly quoted by such Thomists as John of St. Thomas, the Salmanticenses, Gonet, and others. We have again studied these texts with their context; there is always the same radical and manifest opposition, not only between Bannez and Molina—Bannez makes no innovations and glories in this fact [5]—but between Molina and St. Thomas. As proof of this we need here only consult the very declarations of the author of the *Concordia*. He diligently sought, by a multiplicity of distinctions,[6] to make his theory agree with the doctrine of the Angelic Doctor, but he had to confess that he separated from him at least on three essential points: the divine motion, the foreknowledge of conditional free acts of the future, and predestination. We know that Suarez is hardly more faithful to the holy Doctor on these and several other questions.[7] The very texts of Molina will

[3] Cf. Del Prado, *De gratia*, Vol. III, ch. xi. Dummermuth, O.P., *S. Thomas et doctrina praemotionis physicae, seu Responsio ad R. P. Schneemann*, 1886; *Responsio ad R. P. Frins, S.J.*, 1895.

[4] *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 1916, p. 397. The words of the Sovereign Pontiff, that we have marked in italics, are the same which Bannez used to express that he never deviated in the least from the teaching of St. Thomas. Cf. Bannez, on IIa IIae, q. 24, a. 6.

[5] Cf. Del Prado, *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, Vol. III, ch. xi, *Utrum Bannezianismus sit vera comoedia a Molinistis inventa?*

[6] The one, for instance, as we shall see, by which he changes the meaning of St. Thomas' conclusion, that *"the knowledge of God is the cause of things."*

[7] *La Ciencia Tomista*, May–June 1917, p. 385, notes that: *"El centenario de Suarez* published, alongside the list of twenty-four propositions which, according to the Sacred Congregation of Studies, express the fundamental theses of the philosophy of St. Thomas, twenty-four propositions of Suarez on the same questions; of

enable us to prove that the criticisms made by the Thomists do not rest upon an *ignoratio elenchi.*

ARTICLE I

MOLINISM RESTRICTS GOD'S UNIVERSAL CAUSALITY AND EVEN THE UNIVERSALITY OF THE PRINCIPLE OF CAUSALITY

With regard to what St. Thomas teaches (Ia, q. 105, a. 5) about the divine motion, Molina writes: "I am confronted by two difficulties: (1) I do not see what is this application, in secondary causes, by which God moves and applies these causes to act. . . . And I candidly confess that I have difficulty in understanding this motion and application which St. Thomas requires in secondary causes. . . . (2) According to this doctrine, God does not concur immediately (*immediatione suppositi*) in the action and effect of secondary causes, but only through the intervention of these causes."[1] According to Molina, as he himself explains in the same chapter, the divine concurrence and the action of creatures are *two partial and co-ordinated causes,* "as when two men are pulling a boat";[2] according to St. Thomas they

these latter, twenty-three are formally in opposition to the doctrine of the Angelic Doctor.

[1] *Concordia,* on Ia, q. 14, a. 13, disp. 26, Paris edition, 1876, pp. 152–153. (All our citations of the *Concordia* are from this edition.) *"Duo autem sunt quae mihi difficultatem pariunt circa doctrinam hanc D. Thomae* Ia, q. 105, a. 5. *Primum est, quod non videam quidnam sit motus ille et applicatio in causis secundis, qua Deus illas ad agendum moveat et applicet. . . . Quare ingenue fateor, mihi valde difficilem esse ad intelligendum motionem et applicationem hanc, quam D. Thomas in causis secundis exigit. . . . Secundum quod mihi difficultatem parit est quia, juxta hanc D. Thomae doctrinam, Deus non concurrit immediate immediatione suppositi ad actiones et effectus causarum secundarum, sed solum mediate, mediis scilicet causis secundis."*

[2] *Concordia, ibid.,* p. 158: "When we say that neither God by His universal concurrence nor secondary causes are total but partial causes of the effects, this must be understood of the partialness of the cause, as they call it, but not of the effect; the total effect, indeed, comes both from God and from the secondary causes; but it comes neither from God nor from secondary causes, as total but as partial cause, which at the same time demands the concurrence and influx of the other cause, *just as when two men are pulling a boat.* . . . Moreover, from what has been said it is clear that, *when causes are subordinated to one another,* so that some are more, some less universal, others are particular, *it is not necessary that the higher in that order always move the lower,* even if they are essentially sub-

are *two total and subordinated causes,* such that the primary cause moves the secondary to act, which means that it applies the latter to its operation. There is, then, only a material likeness between Molina's texts (quoted by Father d'Alès) on the divine concurrence, and the texts of St. Thomas.[3]

Thus our first criticism is verified; Molinism restricts God's universal causality and even the universality of the principle of causality. According to this view, the transition to act of the secondary cause does not come from God; and as potency cannot, of itself alone, pass into act, this transition is without a cause. If this be so, with Molina and Suarez we must reject the validity of the Thomistic proof for God's existence based on the principle that *whatever is in motion is set in motion* by another.[4]

To escape from the difficulty, Father d'Alès and some Molinists admit a *divine indifferent premotion* which is the cause of our free act *as to the entity of it,* but which does not grant that the *mode* of the act should obtain its initiative therefrom, so that the free determination depends solely on us and not on God.[5] If such be the case, this premotion, given to free creatures, in certain determinate circumstances when a certain duty has to be performed, will incline them neither to a good consent nor to a dissent; it will be the cause neither of the good act nor of the physical act of sin; it will depend solely on us and not on God whether there is volition rather than nolition, acceptance, or refusal. And then, as Gonet says, "according to this way of explaining the divine concurrence, the betrayal by Judas is the work of God no less than is the conversion of St. Paul," [6] or

ordinated to one another and are mutually dependent on one another in producing some effect; but it suffices if they *immediately exert an influence on the effect.*" This means, according to the example just quoted by Molina: as when two men are pulling a boat. In truth, they are not then the *total and essentially subordinated, but partial and co-ordinated causes,* as the expression used by Molina denotes: *a simultaneous and non-previous cause.*

[3] For a comparison of these texts, cf. Del Prado, *De gratia,* III, 13–16, 36–40.

[4] Cf. Molina, on Ia, q. 2, a. 3, quoted by Del Prado, *De gratia,* III, 165; Suarez, *Disp. met.,* 20, secs. 2, 3; 22, sec. 2, n. 51.

[5] D'Alès, *art. cit.,* pp. 9, 22.

[6] Gonet, on Ia, disp. 6, *de scientia media,* sec. 10. Also John of St. Thomas, on Ia, q. 14, disp. 20, a. 4, n. 31. Billuart, *eod. loco* and *De gratia,* diss. 5, a. 6, says the same about Congruism in the eighth *Sequitur,* writing against the system of Congruent grace, that: "*God* in that case *is no more the author of good than of bad acts,* because in so far in that system God is said to be the author of good

the conversion of St. Paul is no more the work of God than is the betrayal by Judas. God is the cause only of the being of these two acts, inasmuch as it is being. Consequently what is greater in the created order, the good consent, will as such be exclusively our work and not the work of God; because, apart from this indifferent motion, all that God would do is to urge us to do good by the good inspirations which He gives also to the wicked, "and with *absolutely equal divine helps,* one man would obey the good inspiration and another would resist it." [7] God would thus remain a stranger to the determination of the free will in which the work of salvation is completed.[8]

Is this an exaggeration on the part of Thomists anxious to deduce all the consequences of Molinism? Not at all. Molina himself wrote: "*Certainly, that we perform our acts well or badly,* which we can do by the faculty alone of our free will and God's general concurrence, *must be referred not to God,* but to ourselves as to a particular and free cause. . . . *God is not, therefore, the cause of virtue* and vice *in us,* but it is proposed and willed by us." [9]

Molina takes this phrase from the *Quaestiones et responsiones ad Christianos,* erroneously attributed to St. Justin Martyr.[10] The preface to the Migne edition rightly says of these *Quaestiones* that they are "notoriously tainted with Pelagianism." [11] We are, indeed, far from

acts inasmuch as He places man in those circumstances in which He foresees that He will make good use of grace and co-operate with him to perform the good act. Likewise, He places him who does what is evil in those circumstances in which He foresees that he will not make use of the grace offered and co-operates with him to do what is evil."

[7] That is plainly what Molina affirms in the *Concordia,* q. 25, a. 4, 5, disp. 1, membr. 2, p. 526.

[8] We have given a long exposition of this consequence of Molinism. Cf. *supra,* pp. 156–157; 387–392.

[9] *Concordia,* q. 14, a. 13, disp. 23, p. 196. On these texts of Molina, cf. Del Prado, *De gratia,* III, 71, 162: "What is to be thought of an indifferent premotion."

[10] We know that the *Quaestiones et responsiones ad orthodoxos* were falsely attributed to St. Justin. Harnack assigns them to Diodorus of Tarsus (fourth century) and Funk prefers to ascribe them to Theodoret of Cyr (fifth century).

[11] We read in Migne, *Patr. graec.,* VI, 21, in the preface: "There follow two works which are unworthy of being attributed to St. Justin Martyr because of the poison of error; yet they are apt enough in themselves to arouse one's curiosity to read and investigate them. These are the *Expositio rectae confessionis,* which is filled with the spirit of the Nestorian heresy; and the *Quaestiones ac responsiones ad orthodoxos,* which is notoriously tainted with Pelagianism. The other, *Quaestiones Christianae ad Graecos* and the *Quaestiones Graecae ad Christianos* and the

the doctrine of canon 22 of the Council of Orange, which says: "No one has of his own anything but lying and sin," and of canon 20, which states: "God works many good things in man that man does not work, but man works no good deeds that God does not give him the strength to do" (Denzinger, nn. 195, 193).

From the fact that God cannot be the cause of sin, how can anyone dare conclude that He is not the cause of our virtue, but only the indifferent cause of the being of the good or bad act in so far as it is being? If our virtue comes solely from us, why did our Lord say: "Without me you can do nothing"? Why did He condemn the prayer of the Pharisee? We ought not to give thanks to Him for what is paramount in the work of salvation, "for the determination to good which is from us and not from God."

Certainly God cannot be the cause of sin; this as such is but a deficiency and requires merely a deficient cause, consequent upon a purely permissive decree of God. The divine motion thus concurs only in the physical act of sin.[12]

On the contrary, by His efficacious grace God positively and infallibly moves us to good, according to St. Thomas, though without doing any violence to our liberty or imposing any necessity on it. St. Thomas, in fact, says not only that God moves us to universal good, but that He is the cause of the being of our free act in so far as it is being. He repeatedly says: "God moves us to know or will or do something; He moves us to meritorious good."[13] It is not a question here merely of good inspirations and sentiments that precede our free act and that are the result of operating grace; it is a question of a free act (under the influence of co-operating grace), for the performance of which the will is both *moved* and *moves itself:*[14] "even the good movement of the free will, whereby anyone is prepared for receiving the gift of grace, is an act of the free will moved by God."[15] "Man needs the help of grace in order to be moved by God to act

Confutatio Aristotelis dogmatum, by their marvelous similarity of style betray the same authorship as the *Quaestiones et responsiones ad orthodoxos.* Cf. Migne, *ibid.,* col. 1243, on the Pelagian origin of the answers to questions 8 and 9 quoted by Molina.

[12] St. Thomas, Ia IIae, q. 79, a. 1, 2. We have dwelt at length on this point in the present work. See pp. 365–397.

[13] See Ia IIae, q. 110, a. 2; q. 111, a. 2.

[14] See Ia IIae, q. 111, a. 2.

[15] See Ia IIae, q. 112, a. 2.

righteously."[16] Furthermore, according to the Angelic Doctor, manifestly *this grace is efficacious of itself* and not because of the previous consent of the free creature. Only in this way does he think it possible to retain the true meaning of the texts of St. Paul, who says: "It is God who worketh in you, both to will and to accomplish. So, then, it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy"; "What hast thou that thou hast not received?"[17] This efficacious grace is so far from being indifferent that St. Thomas wrote: "As the will *can change its act for another,* much more can God do so with the will."[18] "Only God can *transfer* the inclination, which He gave the will, from one *thing to another.*"[19] Yet the infallible efficacy of this grace, far from destroying liberty in us, produces *in us and with us* the determination of the choice, and this even to the free mode of this act. *"God, indeed, immutably moves the will on account of the efficacy of the power that moves it,*[20] which cannot fail; but on account of the nature of our will, which is indifferently disposed toward various things, it is not necessitated but remains free."[21] *God certainly does not impose* upon our liberty *a determination for some particlar thing which would not come from us;* in the performance of the good act, He moves us to determine ourselves freely (by deliberation) in one way rather than in another, and this motion is infallible on account of the efficacy of the power that moves us.[22] As for sin, He permits the defect and concurs in the physical act of sin. We shall quote the principal texts of St. Thomas on this agreement between the divine motion and the human freedom in the third chapter of this appendix.

Molina, who refuses to admit this divine motion, sought to distinguish in our free act that which comes from God (the being as such of the act), and that which comes solely from us (its good or

[16] See Ia IIae, q. 109, a. 9.

[17] St. Thomas, on Phil. 2: 13; Rom. 9: 16; I Cor. 4: 7.

[18] *De veritate,* q. 22, a. 8.

[19] *Op. cit.,* q. 22, a. 9.

[20] But not because of the foreseen consent.

[21] *De malo,* q. 6, a. 1 ad 3um.

[22] See *supra* (p. 359), how this doctrine agrees with the canon of the Council of Trent, Sess. VI, ch. iv, which states: "If anyone saith that man's free will, moved and excited by God, *no wise co-operates; . . . that it cannot refuse its consent* if it would, but that, *as something inanimate, it does nothing whatever and is merely passive: let him be anathema.*"

bad determination). The followers of indifferent motion side with him on this point. Contrary to this, St. Thomas writes as follows in one of his famous articles on Predestination, which is absolutely irreconcilable with Molinism: "There is no distinction between what is the result of free will and what is of Predestination; as there is no distinction between what is the result of a secondary cause and of a first cause." [23]

Evidently Molina restricts God's universal causality, for he affirms that apart from it are realized the transition to act of the secondary cause and the determination of the free cause, so that our good consent depends solely upon us and not upon God. The Author of salvation is not the cause of that which is most important in the order of salvation. "God is not the cause of virtue and vice in us." On the contrary, we read in the Scripture: "Destruction is thy own, O Israel; thy help is only in me" (Osee 13: 9).

St. Thomas has summed up his teaching on this point by saying: "Because the first cause exerts more influence on the effect than the secondary cause, therefore *whatever of perfection there is in the effect is to be attributed principally to the first cause;* but what there is *of defect* is to be attributed to the secondary cause, which does not operate so efficaciously as the first cause" (*De pot.*, q. 3, a. 7 ad 15).

ARTICLE II

DOES THE SCIENTIA MEDIA POSIT A PASSIVITY IN THE PURE ACT?

On the subject of God's foreknowledge, Molina declares not only that his theory of the scientia media [1] is new, but that it appears to him to be contrary to the teaching of St. Thomas. After proposing it, imbued with the spirit of Origen, he adds: "Although, to tell the truth, St. Thomas seems to suggest the contrary in Ia, q. 14, a. 8 ad 1um, when he explains and attempts to interpret in the opposite sense the passage of Origen to which we shall immediately refer, in which he is clearly of the same opinion as we are.[2] The passage of Origen quoted by Molina states that: "A thing will happen not be-

[23] See Ia, q. 23, a. 5.

[1] Molina, *Concordia*, q. 23, a. 4, 5, disp. 1, p. 550: "This idea of ours of reconciling free will with divine predestination, to my knowledge has not been presented so far by anyone."

[2] *Concordia*, q. 14, a. 13, disp. 52, p. 325.

cause God knows it as future; but, because it is future, it is on that account known by God, before it exists." [3] This text St. Thomas regards as an objection to his doctrine; Molina makes it the foundation of his own.[4]

For St. Thomas what is present was from all eternity future, only because an eternal cause had to produce it, and only the first cause is eternal.[5] Now, the first cause produces nothing external to itself by a necessity of nature but only "according to the determination of His will and intellect." [6] Thus the thesis of St. Thomas is applied to future events: *"The knowledge of God is the cause of things, in so far as His will is joined to it.* Hence the knowledge of God as the cause of things is usually called the *knowledge of approbation."* [7]

Molina strives of course to maintain the conclusion of St. Thomas, that "God's knowledge is the cause of things"; but instead of understanding it, as the text of the Angelic Doctor demands, of the knowledge of approbation (called also that of vision), he understands it of the knowledge of simple intelligence (or of possibles), which directs the divine liberty that is the cause of things.[8] Then, between the knowledge of simple intelligence and the divine decree, he introduces the *scientia media* or knowledge of conditional free acts of the future. Now God, according to his view, is not at all the cause of the determination of these free conditionate futures (*futuribilia*). And so it is his contention that the divine knowledge is the cause of all things without exception, without being the cause, however, of the free determination of creatures. The link which connects article 8 with 13 of this question of St. Thomas is thus severed, as we have shown (*supra,* pp. 71–74).

It is clear, indeed, that in the system devised by Molina, God is the *cause,* neither by His knowledge nor by His liberty, of our free determination. By the *scientia media* God has simply *foreseen* that if Peter

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] Cf. Del Prado, *De gratia,* III, 49.

[5] St. Thomas, Ia, q. 16, a. 7 ad 3um.

[6] See Ia, q. 19, a. 4.

[7] See Ia, q. 14, a. 8.

[8] *Concordia,* q. 14, a. 8, p. 2. This text of Molina which Father d'Alès points out to us on p. 18 of his pamphlet, is well known to Thomists. The majority of them refute this Molinist interpretation of the eighth article of this question of St. Thomas. Cf. Gonet, on Ia, q. 14, disp. 3, a. 2, nn. 31, 35, 41. Salmanticenses, on Ia, q. 14, a. 8, dub. 2, n. 11.

were placed in these circumstances he would choose freely such and such a thing; and the divine liberty has *de facto* placed Peter in these circumstances concurring *indifferently* with him, or, in other words, giving him a grace that *he alone* will cause to be either efficacious or sterile.

The *scientia media* is so far from being the cause of things that Molina wrote: *"It was not in God's power to know by this knowledge anything else than He actually knew."* [9] Does this mean that this necessity depends on the divine essence which is the foundation of possible things? No, for Molina at once adds: *"If the created free will were to do the opposite of what it did as it truly can do, God would have known this very act by the same knowledge, by which He really knows it, but not that He actually knows it."* [10] Thus then the *scientia media* depends entirely on the creature. God, according to Molina, can only *explore* and *ascertain* what decision a certain man would make in certain circumstances. He is *powerless* to preserve Peter from every fall into sin during the night of the Passion. He foresees only that Peter placed in these circumstances would deny his Master, and that afterwards in other circumstances he would retrieve himself, and would *render efficacious* by his consent the sufficient grace which would be offered him. If it is so, says Del Prado, *"this kind of knowledge on God's part is dependent, as at its very source, upon creatures themselves. Hence God begs this scientia media from the determination itself of the created will."* [11] Thus our second criticism is verified. "The *scientia media* is *passive* with regard to free conditional future acts, which determine it instead of being determined by it. The *scientia media,* positing a *passivity in the pure Act,* could not be a pure perfection; it is a notion which attributes a human imperfection to God." This disadvantage is the necessary outcome of the first. If we restricted God's universal causality and the passivity of the creature, we are obliged to put a passivity in God. This explains why Molina, after the exposition of his theory, had to write: "Although, to tell the truth, St. Thomas seems to suggest the contrary in Ia, q. 14, a. 8 ad 1um." We fail to understand how Molinists of our times, however desirous to call themselves Thomists, can claim that the *scientia media* does not impair the thesis of St. Thomas that

[9] *Concordia,* q. 14, a. 13, disp. 52, p. 318.
[10] *Ibid.*
[11] Del Prado, III, 137.

"God's knowledge is the cause of things," and all that he has written on the intrinsic efficacy of grace.[12]

We discard the texts in which Molina affirms that he considers his opinion on predestination must be maintained, not only against St. Thomas, but against both St. Augustine and St. Thomas together. We are thus led to infer that his opinion was contrary to theirs.[13] If he had thought he could clearly reconcile his point of view with that of the Angelic Doctor, he would have had no need to write as follows: "Although the authority of St. Thomas is of very great weight, yet on this account there must be no receding from our decision which has been corroborated by so many most convincing arguments."[14] Evidently the disciples of Molina would completely abandon their master and would cease to be called Molinists, if they truly followed the doctrine of the Angelic Doctor on predestination as set forth in Ia, q. 23, especially in article 5, and if they understood the axiom that "to anyone who does what he can, God does not deny grace," as explained in Ia IIae, q. 112, a. 3.

We maintain, too, that many Molinists separate from St. Thomas in defending the proposition that "God not only knows creatures in Himself, but He also knows them *immediately in themselves.*"[15] This proposition is taught, for instance, by the Wiceburgenses,[16] who vainly

[12] A compilation of the texts of St. Thomas on the intrinsic efficacy of grace has been made by Del Prado in his *De gratia,* II, 92–140. We shall quote the principal ones in the third chapter of this appendix.

[13] *Concordia,* q. 23, a. 4, 5, disp. 1, membr. 6, Paris edition, 1876, p. 468; passages quoted by Del Prado in the *De gratia,* III, 53–57, are according to the Lisbon edition, 1858, p. 431.

[14] *Concordia,* q. 23, a. 4, 5, disp. 1, membr. 12, 1876 ed., p. 537.

[15] It is a question here of the *medium* of divine knowledge and not of its *terminus;* for all theologians admit that God knows created things exactly as they are outside of Himself.

[16] Wiceburgenses, *De Deo,* disp. 3, a. 3, n. 117: "God knows distinctly all possible creatures"; n. 118: "God knows them *in Himself;* and indeed, on as many grounds as He is *essentially* connected with them"; n. 119: "God knows even *immediately* possible things *in themselves.*" Likewise n. 122, art. 4, n. 125, we read: "God does not see absolutely future contingent things in decrees previously determined for one end"; n. 127: "God sees futures of this kind *immediately in themselves, i. e.,* in their objective truth and actual existence in succession of time"; art. 5, n. 135: "God does not know conditionally future contingent things in subjectively absolute and objectively conditional decrees"; n. 137: 'God knows these futures *immediately in themselves,* before and independently of any actual decree." These theses of the Wiceburgenses find an echo, without a doubt, among many Molinists.

strive to reconcile it with this other proposition of St. Thomas, that "God sees things other than Himself, *not in themselves* but in Himself" (Ia, q. 14, a. 5). And it is not without reason that, following Gonet, we have quoted Suarez [17] as favorable to this opinion, for he declares it to be probable although St. Thomas saw an impossibility in it.[18] For the Angelic Doctor the *medium* of God's knowledge of creatures can be only His essence and power or His causality. On this point we have referred to Thomist commentators, not that it is sufficient to study the Molinist doctrine from their works, but because they point out clearly what it is that separates this doctrine from that of St. Thomas. Their judgment does not rest upon a *complete ignoratio elenchi,* but is pronounced upon the real point at issue, and has never been refuted.

Let us come to our third criticism.

ARTICLE III

DOES THE SCIENTIA MEDIA LEAD TO DETERMINATION OF CIRCUMSTANCES?

On this point, Father d'Alès (p. 30) makes the following admission: "The theory of the *scientia media* has often been proposed in a form by which its opponents are victorious. It has been said that God knows a priori all the possible determinations of the rational creature, so much so that on such grounds He sees distinctly and without any possible alternative which of two opposites the rational creature would choose when placed in a certain combination of circumstances. To this assertion the opponents reply that the rational creature, con-

[17] Cf. *supra,* p. 68.

[18] Suarez, *De Deo,* Bk. III, *De attributis Dei positivis,* ch. ii, n. 16: "Thus explained, this opinion is not improbable nor has it any disadvantages; wherefore we ought to fight strenuously with its authors for it. Nevertheless St. Thomas in all his writings, not only teaches the prior mode of knowing (in Himself) to be the true one, but he even excludes this second way (in creatures themselves), and especially in Book I of the *Contra Gentes,* ch. xlviii, where he *ex professo* proves that there cannot be in God this twofold knowledge of creatures, but the first only." Suarez also says, when explaining the *scientia media:* "We must say, therefore, that God knows these conditionally future things . . . by penetrating *immediately* the truth which is or can be conceived *in them;* nor is there need of any *other medium* for Him to know them. And this manner of expressing it is in agreement with those authors who say that God knows future contingent things by the immediate intuition of their truth." *De scientia Dei futurorum contingentium absolutorum,* Bk. II, ch. vii, n. 15.

fronted by two opposites, both of which appeal to the will, can choose the one just as well as the other, that in such an emergency indetermination is of the very essence of liberty, that the reality of the determination is the *sine qua non* condition of the knowledge that God can have of them, and therefore that it is metaphysically repugnant for God to see the creature determining itself one way or the other, if, in the actual state of affairs, it must not determine itself.[1] We candidly confess that this answer seems to us to be conclusive and that we cannot defend the theory of the *scientia media,* proposed in these terms, as being a premature and universal judgment about that which must not be judged."

This manner of presenting the *scientia media* is found not only among the more or less inexperienced disciples, but among such masters as Suarez.[2] It is rejected by Molina as implying Determinism,[3] in a text quoted by Father d'Alès (p. 30) and well known to Thomists.[4]

In truth, Molina proposes the *scientia media* in a slightly different way. According to him, God, before any divine determining decree, is able to know the conditionally free acts of the future by reason of *supercomprehension of the causes.* He says: "God has a very profound and unfathomable comprehension of each free will. He sees clearly what each free cause would do of its own accord in such and such circumstances, and even in an infinity of possible circumstances. We call this vision on God's part, *scientia media.*"[5] It is not a

[1] We say precisely against this theory that: "it is metaphysically repugnant for God, before any divine decree, to see in the free creature a determination which is not there and which is contrary to the essence of liberty. Neither can He see it in the circumstances, if the circumstances are insufficient for determining our choice, as all the theologians teach against Determinism."

[2] Suarez, *opusc.* II, *De scientia futurorum contingentium,* Bk. II, ch. vii, n. 15 (1617 ed., p. 238; Vives ed., XI, 370–375). "God knows these conditionally future things . . . by penetrating *immediately* the truth which is or can be conceived *in them;* nor is there need of any *other medium* for Him to know them."

[3] Molina, *Concordia,* q. 14, a. 13, disp. 52, p. 322: "*Future contingent things . . . by their very nature are indifferent,* so that any one of them may or may not be. . . . Wherefore their foundation for this certainly breaks down," of those, namely, who say that: "in future contingent things always one of them is determinately true from all eternity before it happens to take place, and the other is determinately false."

[4] Del Prado, *De gratia,* III, 146.

[5] Molina, *Concordia,* q. 14, a. 13, disp. 52, p. 317: "From a most profound and inscrutable comprehension of every free will in His essence, He has intued

question here of conjecture, but a question of *infallible* foreknowledge.

The difficulty still remains; fatalism is not evaded. The supercomprehension of a free undetermined cause cannot cause one to see in it a determination which is not there. If anyone answers that this determination is known from the circumstances in which the created liberty would be placed, he ends in determinism of circumstances. *This objection* is raised against the theory of Molina, *not only by the Thomists, but also by Suarez and Mazzella.*[6] *Suarez declares, in fact, that the theory of the supercomprehension of free causes* is contrary to the teaching of St. Thomas and that it *destroys liberty.*[7] *Molina and Suarez*—though they do so anonymously [8]—*thus indulge in mutual reproaches, in that their conception of the scientia media implies fatalism. Were they themselves ignorant of the real point at issue?* If so, then no one has ever understood the problem as stated, which is, nevertheless, one of the clearest. It may be stated as follows: Between Thomists and Molinists it is not at all a question of knowing whether God infallibly knows conditional free acts of the future. The whole purpose of the controversy is to know the *medium* in which God sees that a certain free cause placed in certain circumstances would choose one particular thing and not ∎ certain other. The Thom-

what each, according to its innate liberty, would do if placed in this or that condition, or even in infinite conditions of things, although it could, however, if it wished, do exactly the opposite."

[6] Mazzella, *De gratia,* disp. 3, a. 7.

[7] Suarez, *op.* II, *De scientia Dei futurorum contingentium,* Bk. II, ch. vii, nn. 3–6, p. 236: "And so the first opinion affirms that God knows these future things in their proximate causes, and *by the perfect comprehension of our free will* and having present to Him all those things which can determine or prevent it from being free. . . . But St. Thomas refutes that opinion in Ia, q. 14, a. 13; q. 57, a. 3; q. 86, a. 4; IIa IIae, q. 171, a. 6 ad 1um and 2um; *Contra Gentes,* Bk. I, ch. lxvi, lxvii." Suarez adds that either this super-comprehension of created liberty gives one only a conjectural knowledge of the future, or else our liberty is destroyed. "It destroys liberty . . . it takes away the use of liberty . . . it is repugnant to liberty."

Molina's theory implies even the *denial of divine liberty,* for God, possessing the super-comprehension of His own liberty, could know infallibly therefore from all eternity, *before any decree,* whether or not there will be a creation; hence creation would no longer be a free act. Cf. Del Prado, *D gratia,* III, 143, 146.

∎ We make no inquiry here as to whether Molina knew that Suarez was defending this view of the *scientia media;* we are only establishing the fact of the criticism he addresses to theologians who admit this view of it; and one of them was Suarez.

ists say that God has seen it in his positive decrees (or merely permissive, if it is a question of a foreseen sin); for instance, He decided, for reasons of which He is judge, to permit Peter to fall into sin during the Passion of Jesus, and afterwards to give him an intrinsically efficacious grace in order *sweetly and firmly* to cause him to repent. According to our view, it is in this sense that this decree is determining.[9]

No, reply the Molinists, God has not seen in his decrees these conditional free acts of the future, because God cannot give Peter an *intrinsically* efficacious grace which would cause him to retrieve himself freely and infallibly. It depends *solely* on Peter to will or not to use the sufficient grace which would be (or will be) given to him.

But, again the Thomists ask, what is the *medium* in which God has seen what Peter would do if placed in a certain combination of circumstances? Suarez' answer leads to fatalism, according to Molina; Molina's answer leads to fatalism, according to Suarez. The defenders of the *scientia media* fall from Charybdis into Scylla. Is there an avenue of escape?

Let us examine the new conception of the *scientia media* presented by Father d'Alès.

CHAPTER II

The Scientia Media Presented Under a New Aspect

Father d'Alès gets his inspiration from Father de Régnon. To the Thomists' question: *"In what medium* does God see the conditional free acts of the future?" Father de Régnon replies: "It is a mystery, an unfathomable mystery. . . . Of all explanations that have been offered, *not one* is completely satisfactory. . . . We must *give up* explaining the *how* of this divine knowledge that we call the knowledge of conditional things. . . . To explain this knowledge is the work of philosophical *dilletantism."* [1] One cannot avoid contradicting oneself with greater grace. But Father de Régnon maintained that

[9] God does not decide to impose upon us a *determination which would not come from us,* but to move us efficaciously to determine ourselves to act (by deliberation) in one particular way rather than in a certain other. This means that He decides to incline us to give our good consent, unless He permits a defect which comes only from a defective cause.

[1] Father de Régnon, *Bannez et Molina,* pp. 113, 114, 115.

God knows the conditional free acts of the future before any determining decree, and that in virtue of the principle of the *virtual priority of truth over goodness.* "The purest metaphysics," he said, "leads us to recognize in God Himself a virtual priority which sets in order Being, Truth, and Goodness. Hence it follows that, according to our way of forming our concepts, the divine intellect, having truth for its object, must be conceived in act *before the will and independently of the will.* Now, an infinite intellect cannot be conceived in act, without our conceiving, at the same time, its including all objects to which it can attain. Therefore the divine intellect extends of itself to *all truth* by a comprehension that is immediate and derived solely from itself. Hence I conclude that metaphysics avoids having recourse to the divine will to explain the divine knowledge and teaches us to rely on the essential relation between intellect and truth." [2]

Father d'Alès (p. 23) says the same thing: "Order is the proper work of the intellect; therefore the intellect must here intervene to prepare the way for the operations of the will, to prevent it from encountering limits beyond which neither the will nor the intellect can go, those that involve the absurd. In other words, the divine knowledge must represent, *previous* to the conclusion of the divine decree, what the essential order allows one to demand of the rational creature and what it does not allow one to demand of it. If the divine will always acts according to design, this is because it is always, *first of all,* regulated by knowledge. Knowledge which intervenes after the formation of the decree, is no longer an operative knowledge." Father d'Alès says further (p. 31): "We defend the *scientia media* as a province apart in the knowledge of simple intelligence and we claim as the signs of it merely the stability proper to this knowledge, the *stability pertaining to the order of possible things,* and it has its foundation in the very essence of God. It needs no more than this, and nothing less, to authorize the divine decree to call forth *such* a series of free determinations of rational creatures in the order of realities." Again (p. 9) he says: "Because the knowledge of simple intelligence has shown to God the possibility, for such ■ created liberty, to orientate itself *by its own power* in *such* circumstances and under the influence of such a motion, God takes His choice of these circumstances and this motion. The order of Providence to which these circumstances and this orientation of created liberty belong, is realized

[2] *Op. cit.,* p. 118.

by God entirely in the concrete. Orientation remains, under the divine realization, what it was as God saw it: *the property* of created liberty. God has the initiative as to the *entity* of the act, in virtue of this transcendent causality which He cannot abdicate; but He forbids Himself the initiative as to the *mode* of the act." Again (p. 10) we read: "The divine decree has not the initiative of ideal determination; it presupposes it, and invests it only with the solidity of the divine choice. A priori the divine knowledge guarantees the act as *realizable;* a posteriori the divine decree brings about its realization; the act realized will be a free one, because every determination comes from the creature.[3] It is a simple idea as well as the right one about this. I feel sure that St. Thomas never saw it otherwise. Cf. Ia, q. 14, a. 13." Father de Régnon (p. 32) writes: "The divine motion of which St. Thomas speaks and which he declares to be infallible, is a motion that is infallible a posteriori, and it presupposes the positive intimation of the divine knowledge of simple intelligence, as to the *possibility* of the created will to be moved freely in this way. To this conception of the divine decree we have no objection from the standpoint of liberty. What do the Bannesians think of it?"

It is our turn to say in reply to this, that it is a *totalis ignoratio elenchi.* In all the preceding exposé, the only thing proved has been the foreknowledge of free *possible* determinations (as emphasized by us). Now the problem to be solved is concerned not with possible things, but with *conditional free acts of the future.*

Father del Prado refuted this new conception of the *scientia media* which had been proposed by Cardinal Pecci, when he said: "The *ratio futuribilis* is one thing, and the *ratio possibilis* is another. Hence, that one may have actual knowledge of the conditional free acts of the future, a knowledge of each and every possible thing is not sufficient for this; this constitutes the main point of the controversy."[4]

[3] We too, Thomists, say that *every determination comes from the creature;* but we add that it also *comes totally from the Creator* (at least for good acts); for God and our will are *two total and subordinated causes.* God efficaciously moves the created will to determine itself by its act of deliberation in one particular way rather than in a certain other.

[4] Del Prado, *De gratia,* III, 476. Not without reason do we quote this work so repeatedly. It is noteworthy that in certain circles little attention has been paid to it. It is the fruit of a lifetime of meditation and labor; it is one of the best, perhaps the very best treatise on grace that has appeared since the great works of the Thomists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The author has

It is most certain for the Thomists that God by His knowledge of simple intelligence sees that Peter, if he were placed in the circumstances of the Passion, *could* remain faithful to His Master or deny Him; these are two *possible opposites*. But it is a question of the foreknowledge of a *conditioned future: Which of these two possibles* would Peter choose if placed in these circumstances?

Hence our answer presents no difficulty:

We say that, before any determining divine decree, God knows infallibly both the merely possible and the conditioned future. (*a*) If He knows only the *possible*, the *scientia media* admits of no infallible, even conditionally infallible, foreknowledge concerning free acts. (*b*) If He knows the *conditioned future*, then all the objections made against the *scientia media* return in full force.

a) Before any decree (positive or permissive), God can certainly know all *possible things*, even those that are free, *v. g.*, that Peter, placed in the circumstances of the Passion *could*—I do not say would—deny his Master. But then, if the scientia media goes no further than this, it adds nothing to the knowledge of simple intelligence, and does not admit of the infallible foreknowledge which is what concerns us in the present case; for, in the circumstances of the Passion, there is, indeed, a possibility of two contradictory choices for Peter: either to be faithful or not. Therefore it will certainly be possible for God to decree to place the Apostle effectively in a certain situation of circumstances and give him an indifferent premotion, which is that admitted by Father d'Alès;[5] but it will not be possible for God thus to foresee infallibly whether Peter will be faithful or not; He will be able only to conjecture this. Also this cannot be the idea of Father d'Alès. Like every Molinist, he has to admit that God, before any decree, knows not only the two possible contradictories, but also the conditioned future, in other words, which of these two possible things would be chosen by the created liberty. What follows from this?

b) If it is maintained that before any determining divine decree

examined at length the doctrine of St. Augustine and St. Thomas, that of Molina, and the *attempts at reconciliation* which, instead of being a higher synthesis, remain mid-way between Molinism and Thomism.

[5] The objection would hold even against Congruism, for the congruent grace in this system has not an intrinsically infallible efficacy. Cf. Del Prado, *De gratia*, Vol. III, ch. ix. *Utrum Concordia Molinae, dealbata per Congruismum Bellarmini et Suarezii mutuaverit speciem suam;* ch. x, *Utrum Sorbonicus . . . revera a Molinismo recedat.*

(positive or permissive), God foresees infallibly such a *conditional free act of the future* by reason of the virtual priority of truth over goodness, one falls back into fatalism or determinism of circumstances. For, after all, according to the hypothesis, this free act of the future is determined neither by a divine decree nor in the created will which is free or indifferent. For it to be foreseen infallibly and not merely conjecturally, it must therefore be determined by the circumstances. The interpretation proposed to us by reason of the principle of the *virtual priority of truth over goodness* necessarily leads to this conclusion.

In fact, this principle is psychologically construed as meaning that *a thing must be known before it is willed*. From this Father de Régnon deduced that "the divine intellect extends of itself to *all truth* by an immediate comprehension which depends entirely on itself . . . regardless of the divine will." [6]

It is easy to reply as Father Guillermin did,[7] by saying: That anyone wills only what is known as *possible* or even as *apt to be chosen by preference*, I concede; that anyone wills only what is known as the *determinate object to be willed*, I deny. To maintain this would lead one to admit at least psychological determinism after the manner of Leibniz.[8] He, too, wrote concerning the defenders of the *scientia media* as follows: "It is amusing to see how they torment themselves to get out of a labyrinth from which there is absolutely no escape. . . . They will never, therefore, get out of trouble unless they admit a predetermination in the preceding act of the free creature which inclines it to determine itself." [9]

We certainly do not deny the virtual priority of truth over goodness, of knowledge over volition; we even defend this against Scotus and Suarez in explaining deliberation and the rôle of the practico-practical final judgment; [10] but it by no means follows, although Father de Régnon may say so, that the divine intellect extends to all

[6] *Bannez et Molina*, p. 118. For quotation of the complete text, see p. 482.

[7] Guillermin, O.P., *L'opuscule de son Eminence le Cardinal Pecci sur la premotion physique et la science moyenne*. A critical exposé appeared in the *Annales de philosophie chrétienne*, 1886, set apart, pp. 38 f.

[8] Cf. Zigliara, *Summa phil.*, 8th ed., II, 458; Gayraud, *Thomisme et Molinisme*, p. 134.

[9] *Theodicée*, I, sec. 48.

[10] We have discussed this question at length and compared the three doctrines of St. Thomas, Suarez, and Leibniz on this point. Cf. *supra*, pp. 269–350.

truth, even before any decree of the divine will. If it were so, God, from all eternity, would know infallibly before any decree, which of these two propositions expresses what will truly happen: there will be a creation, there will not be ■ creation. Creation would no longer be a free act. We should have to say with Leibniz: "God would be neither good nor wise, if He had not created." We should have to admit that creation is a moral necessity in virtue of the principle that the best must be intended, understood in the sense of absolute intellectualism. *Truth,* indeed, *precedes goodness, but it follows being, and previous to any divine decree the conditional free acts of the future have not any determinate being; their absolute contingency is opposed to this.*[11] We are always confronted, therefore, with the same difficulty: the *scientia media,* devised to safeguard liberty, destroys it.

Perhaps in answer to this, some may say: We give up explaining the *how* of the *scientia media;* not one of the proposed *media* is satisfactory; but it can well be that God in the depths of His infinite wisdom has some *medium* unknown to us. The Thomists do not prove that it is impossible for God to know the conditioned future in any other *medium* than that of His determining decrees.

Excuse me, that is what we are proving; for, previous to any determinating divine decree, the *conditional free act of the future is undetermined,* and cannot therefore be known: "nothing is intelligible except in so far as it is in act." To say that it is determined of itself or by the circumstances is to fall into Determinism (cf. *Perihermeneias,* Bk. I, lect. 13). The error is just the same if one claims that, before any determination on the part of the divine will, a certain free act rather than its contrary or the voluntary omission of every act, is infallibly represented in the divine essence, not only as possible but as *conditionally future.*

[11] St. Thomas (Ia, q. 14, a. 8: "Whether the knowledge of God is the cause of things.") says precisely this: "For since the *intelligible form* has a relation to opposite things (inasmuch as the same knowledge relates to opposites), *it would not produce* ■ *determinate effect unless it were determined to one thing by the appetite,* as the Philosopher says in VI *Metaph.,* text. 10. . . . Hence His knowledge must be the cause of things, *in so far as His will is joined to it.*" St. Thomas says the same thing in IIa IIae, q. 171, a. 3: "Certain things are completely beyond the knowledge of all men; not that they are in themselves unknowable, but because of the defect of human knowledge, such as the mystery of the Trinity. . . . Others do not come within the scope of any man's knowledge, because *in themselves they are not knowable; such are future contingent things, the truth of which is not determined.*"

Therefore our three criticisms still hold good, and the first is the *raison d'être* of the other two. The *scientia media,* in whatever manner it is presented, (1) restricts God's universal causality, since the free determination of our good consent does not come entirely from God any more than the defect of the bad consent does; (2) the *scientia media* posits as a natural consequence a passivity in the divine knowledge which is determined by the conditioned futures according to the good pleasure of free creatures; (3) it leads, finally, as the Thomists commonly teach,[12] to determinism of the circumstances, and it would avoid this only by sacrificing the infallibility of foreknowledge. All these disadvantages arise from the fact that Molina did not entertain a sufficiently exalted notion of the divine causality and its efficacy.

CHAPTER III

The Solution of St. Thomas

It presents itself readily from what we have said. Here we can give only a summary of it together with the principal references. A compilation of the texts quoted in full, which we only point out here, was made by Father del Prado in his work, *De gratia,* Vol. II, ch. iii; Vol. III, ch. ii, and epilogue, to which we repeatedly refer the reader in the course of this article.

According to St. Thomas:

1) The first cause and the secondary cause are not two partial coordinated causes, "like two men pulling a boat," but they are *two total subordinated causes* such that the first *moves* the second to its action. The *whole* effect depends thus on God as its first cause, and upon the creature as its secondary cause.[1]

2) The divine motion which inclines us efficaciously to good (either natural or supernatural) is not indifferent; it is not made efficacious

[12] Cf. *infra,* beginning of ch. iv, note 2.

[1] See Ia, q. 105, a. 5; *De pot.,* q. 3, a. 4 and 7 ad 7, ad 13; *Contra Gentes,* III, chs. lxvi, cxlix; *De malo,* q. 3, a. 2, ad 4. *Contra errores Graecorum,* ch. xxiii; in this chapter St. Thomas positively rejects simultaneous concurrence in these words: "As if it were said to be like *several pulling a boat.*" It is the very example that Molina makes use of (*Concordia,* q. 14, a. 13, disp. 26, p. 158) to express the nature, according to him, of the divine concurrence. Cf. Del Prado, *op. cit.,* III, 36–40.

by our foreseen consent, but *it moves us to determine ourselves to act in one particular way rather than in a certain other.*[2]

3) Sin happens only as the result of a *permissive decree* of God; it is formally a defect which, as such, demands only a deficient cause, *God concurs only in the physical act of sin.*[3]

4) No one is *deprived* of the efficacious grace necessary for salvation except through a fault which is due to our own defectibility. God is not bound to remedy this defect; in fact He often does so, but not always. That is a mystery.[4]

5) Under the influence of intrinsically efficacious grace *the will determines itself freely,* for it is moved by God as befitting to its nature; now by nature it enjoys a dominating indifference with regard to every particular good deemed good under one aspect, insufficient under another. The relation of our will to this object is contingent; moreover, our will dominates the attraction that this good has for it. This dominating indifference (potential in the faculty; actual in the choice itself) constitutes the freedom of the act. The act is free because it proceeds, under the indifference of the judgment, from a will that has a universal amplitude which extends farther than the particular good to which it is inclined. God by His efficacious motion does not change, and even cannot change this relation of our voluntary act to this object, since the act is specified by this object. Therefore it is not contradictory to say that the will remains free, although there is a mystery in this which is analogous to that of the creative act.[5]

6) That which now is, was *from all eternity future* only because an *eternal cause* had to bring it into existence, and only the first cause is eternal.[6]

7) Now, the first cause brings nothing into existence that is external to itself by a necessity of its nature; but only "according to the

[2] See Ia, q. 105, a. 4; Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 4, c; ad 3; Ia IIae, q. 111, a. 2 ad 2; q. 113, the whole question; IIa IIae, q. 24, a. 11; *De malo,* q. 6, a. 1, ad 3; *De carit.,* a. 12; Rom. 9, lect. 3, on the text: "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy"; Ephes. 3, lect. 2; Heb. 12, lect. 3; 13, lect. 3; cf. Del Prado, *op. cit.,* II, 92–109.

[3] See Ia IIae, q. 79, a. 1, 2.

[4] See Ia IIae, q. 2, a. 5 ad 1. *Contra Gentes,* III, ch. clviii. We have discussed this question at length, which is that of sufficient grace. Cf. *supra,* pp. 000–000.

[5] See Ia IIae, q. 113, a. 3; q. 10, a. 4; *Contra Gentes,* III, ch. lxxxix; *De malo,* q. 6, a. 1 ad 3, etc. Cf. Del Prado, *op. cit.,* II, 259–298. We have explained this point of doctrine; cf. *supra,* pp. 76–77; 147–150; 156–159; 362–364.

[6] See Ia, q. 16, a. 7 ad 3; *Perihermenias,* I, lect. 13.

determination of His will and intellect." [7] Thus the knowledge of God is the cause of things "in so far as His will is joined to it," [8] by a *decree*. And the decree or command, for St. Thomas, is an act of the intellect which presupposes the choice made by the will.[9] It is not, therefore, because things will be that God knows them, but these things will be because God has decreed that they would be.[10] Hence there is no infallible foreknowledge either of future free acts or of conditionally future free acts, except by a divine determining decree which is either positive or negative (a decree either objectively absolute or objectively conditional).[11]

It follows that the doctrine of St. Thomas, in opposition to that of Molina:

1) Maintains the *universal causality of God* and His omnipotence. God is not *powerless* to keep Peter from all unfaithfulness in the very circumstances of the Passion; but He decides to permit this defect for very sublime reasons of which He is the judge. He also decides to raise Peter up again by a very strong and very mild movement of grace which will incline him infallibly and freely to repent. Peter's good consent will not be *solely* because he is free to act; he will not be able to pride himself on it. It will be caused in him by the Author of all good, by the Author of salvation, for it is He who saves us. To be saved, it is not enough to say: "Lord, Lord." We must do the will of our Father who is in heaven. The work of salvation consists, rightly so, in the good consent. God cannot be a stranger in the production of that which is nobler in this order. We also say to Him: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"; give us, O Lord, the grace to do Thy holy will or, as St. Augustine expresses it: "give what Thou commandest, and command what Thou wilt." It would be a blasphemy to claim that God is not more the author of the virtuous act than He is of sin, that He is the cause, by His indifferent concurrence, only of the entity as such of these two acts.

2) The doctrine of St. Thomas posits as a natural consequence *no*

[7] See Ia, q. 19, a. 4.

[8] See Ia, q. 14, a. 8.

[9] See Ia IIae, q. 17, a. 1.

[10] See Ia, q. 14, a. 8, ad 1.

[11] See previously quoted passages, and *De veritate*, q. 6, a. 3; Ia, q. 57, a. 2; Ia, q. 14, a. 11; IIa IIae, q. 171, a. 3: "Future contingent things the truth of which is not determined, are not in themselves knowable"; III *Contra Gentes*, ch. lvi. Cf. Del Prado, *op. cit.*, III, 49–52.

passivity in the divine knowledge which is truly the *cause of things* and is not *measured* by things. God is not, by His supercomprehension of causes, the *explorer* of created wills, obliged to *ascertain* how they will choose to act in certain given circumstances. God is infinitely superior to this anthropomorphic conception of Him.[12]

3) The doctrine of St. Thomas safeguards human liberty by means of *the transcendent efficacy of the divine causality* which is able to incline us *firmly and suavely* (or infallibly and freely) to determine ourselves in the choice of what is good, and also to concur in the physical act of sin, the defect of which comes only from the deficient cause, and it presupposes a purely permissive decree of God.

The force and suavity of the efficacious grace are so intimately united that, to fail to recognize the first is to fail to see the second, and so become involved in theories which, in order the better to safeguard the free will, destroy it.

Objections

1st obj. The Molinists refuse to admit this doctrine because it is evident for them, so they say, that God cannot incline us infallibly to determine ourselves in one particular way rather than in a certain other.

Are they quite sure of having this evidence, and of knowing enough about omnipotence so as to express themselves in this manner? St. Thomas, too, with a prudence and a boldness which are the mark of genius, wrote: "Every act of the will, inasmuch as it is an act, not only is from the will as the immediate agent, but is also from God as the first agent who more vehemently stamps it with His imprint; *hence just as the will can change its act for another, much more can God.*"[13] "Only God can transfer the will's inclination, which He gave it, from one thing to another, according as He wills."[14] "God alone therefore (who alone creates the soul) can move the will as agent without violence. Hence it is said (Prov. 21: 1): *'The heart of the*

[12] John of St. Thomas, on Ia, q. 14, disp. 20, a. 4, n. 29, says of the disadvantages of this theory of the *scientia media* that "they amount to the greatest imperfection in God."

[13] *De veritate*, q. 22, a. 8: "Whether God can force the will." Cf. Ia, q. 105, a. 4: "Whether God can move the created will."

[14] *De veritate*, q. 22, a. 9: "Whether any creature can change the will." Cf. Ia, q. 111, a. 2: "Whether angels can change the will of man."

king is in the hand of the Lord: whithersoever He will He shall turn it'; and (Phil. 2: 13): *'For it is God who worketh in you, both to will and to accomplish, according to His good will.'*[15] . . . Some nevertheless, unable to understand how God can cause in us the movement of the will without prejudice to liberty, have endeavored to give a false exposition to the authorities quoted. They say, in fact, that God causes in us to will and to accomplish by causing in us the power to will, and not by *causing us to will this or that.* This is the exposition of Origen (III *Periarchon*).[16] . . . *But the authority of Scripture is in manifect opposition to all this.* It is said (Is. 26: 12): *'O Lord, Thou hast wrought all our works in us.'* Hence we receive from God not only the power to will, but also our very operations."[17]

2*d obj.* But Father d'Alès (p. 23) insists that God's power is limited by the absurd. And it is absurd to say that the world moves itself, if it is moved by God. St. Thomas (Ia. q. 105, a. 4, obj. 2) states this objection: "God cannot make two contradictories to be true at the same time. But this would follow if He moved the will; for to be voluntarily moved means *to be moved from within,* and *not by another.*"

He replies: "To be moved voluntarily, is to be moved from within, that is, by an interior principle: yet this interior principle may be caused by an exterior principle; and so *to be moved from within is not repugnant to being moved by another.*" Also, in his reply to the first objection, he says: "God, while moving the will, does not force it, because he gives the will its own natural inclination."

3*d obj.* We must safeguard not only spontaneity which is found, too, in the animal, but also liberty. "The determination of the secondary free cause remains something which does not belong to the first Cause";[18] for it cannot be that: "one and the same act of a rational creature be both free and necessary; free as getting its determination from the creature, and *necessary* with regard to the same creature, *as getting its determination from the Creator*" (Father d'Alès, p. 20). There would no longer be either merit or demerit. This objection is found in the *Summa* in the article just quoted (Ia, q. 105, a. 4, obj. 3): "Movement is attributed to the mover rather than to the one moved;

[15] *Contra Gentes,* III, ch. lxxxviii.

[16] We have seen *supra* how Molina bases his theory of the scientia media on a statement of Origen. Cf. *Concordia,* p. 325.

[17] *Contra Gentes,* III, ch. lxxxix.

[18] D'Alès, *op. cit.,* p. 25.

wherefore homicide is not ascribed to the stone, but to the thrower. Therefore, if God moves the will, it follows that voluntary actions are not imputed to man for reward or blame."

St. Thomas replies: "If the will were so moved by another as in no way to be moved *from within* itself, the act of the will would not be imputed for reward or blame. But since *its being moved by another does not prevent its being moved from within itself,* as we have stated, *it does not thereby forfeit the motive for merit or demerit.*"

The determination of the choice is not imposed upon us by God as a determination which in no way would come from us. God moves us to determine ourselves in a certain way, for what is good, or He permits our defect.

In Ia IIae, q. 9, a. 6, the objection is presented in this form: "If, therefore, man's will were moved by *God alone,* it would never be moved to evil." The holy Doctor replies to this third objection as follows: "God moves man's will, as the universal mover, to the universal object of the will, which is good. And without this universal motion, man cannot will anything. But man determines himself by his reason, to will this or that, which is *true* or *apparent good.* Nevertheless, sometimes *God moves some specially to the willing of something determinate, which is good; as in the case of those whom He moves by grace,* as we shall state later on (q. 109, 112)."

In other words, if God *alone* moved the will, if under the influence of the divine motion the will did not move itself (as secondary cause), sin would be impossible. It does not occur in the act in which the will under the influence of operating grace is moved without moving itself. It can be found in the act in which the will is *moved* and *moves itself;* in that case, if God so permits, the will can be defective. St. Thomas distinguishes very clearly between these two movements when speaking of operating and co-operating grace. (Cf. Ia IIae, q. 111, a. 2.) For the same reason he teaches that it was not possible for the first act of the devil to be a sin, but only the second. (Cf. Ia, q. 63, a. 5, c and ad 3.)

4th obj. In the text just quoted (Ia IIae, q. 9, a. 6, ad 3), St. Thomas only says that God moves the will to universal good, and that it determines itself to particular good.

Reply: We have already shown (p. 80, n. 35, and p. 157, n. 98) that in vain one would seek to conclude from this text that God does not move our will to determine itself in the choice. Article 4

of the following question, the purpose of which is to state precisely the way in which God moves the free will, is strictly opposed to this interpretation. "Because the will is an active principle not determinate to one thing, but having an indifferent relation to many things, God so moves it that He does not determine it of necessity to one thing, but its movement remains contingent and not necessary, except in those things to which it is moved naturally."

Moreover, as we have just said, the true interpretation of this passage (Ia IIae, q. 9, a. 6 ad 3) was given by St. Thomas in Ia IIae, q. 111, a. 2, where he distinguishes between operating and co-operating grace. (See also Dummermuth *S. Thomas et doctrina praemotionis physicae,* p. 358.) For our will, the fact that it moves itself in making the choice, does not exclude the divine motion for this same act. St. Thomas says, on the contrary: "When anything *moves itself* this does not exclude its being *moved by another,* from which it has even this, that it moves itself; and so it is not repugnant to liberty that God is the cause of the act of free will," *De malo,* q. 3, a. 2 ad 4. See also *Contra Gentes,* III, ch. lxxxix, and *De veritate,* q. 24, a. 14, where he says: "The will of man is not determined to one particular operation, but is indifferently disposed for many things; and so it is somewhat *in potentia, unless moved by some active principle:* either by what is externally represented to it, as in the case of apprehended good; or *by what interiorly operates, as God Himself does.*" On these texts of St. Thomas, see Dummermuth, *S. Thomas et doctrina praemotionis physicae,* p. 358.

Instance: But the Molinists reply that St. Thomas says in his other works: "The first cause does not so act upon the will *as to determine it necessarily for one thing* as nature does; and therefore the determination of the act is left in the power of the reason and the will." [19]

Reply: St. Thomas in these texts and others like them, says the divine motion does *not necessitate* our will, that is to say, does not destroy our will; but he does not say that the free determination of the act is solely our work. He positively affirms the contrary. He says that this determination is the work of the will which moves itself and is moved by God, without which the Author of salvation would

[19] *De pot.,* q. 3, a. 7, ad 13. Father d'Alès (p. 7, note) quotes this text and various others of a like nature in which St. Thomas affirms only that the divine motion *does not necessitate* the will or what comes to the same thing, does not destroy its liberty, and that our will cannot be moved by *any creature.*

no more be the cause of the good than of the bad consent. We cannot repeat this too often, that the first Cause certainly does not impose upon us a determination which would in no way come from us; it moves us to determine ourselves in one way rather than in a certain other, if it concerns a good act, or it permits our defect if it concerns a bad act. "The good movement of the free will, whereby anyone is prepared for receiving the gift of grace, is an act of the free will moved by God." [20]

5th obj. The other instances formulated by the Molinists are plainly to be seen in the *Summa,* Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 4. God by His efficacious grace cannot incline us infallibly to determine ourselves in a certain way, without at the same time necessitating us, for we cannot resist this divine motion. St. Thomas likewise stated this objection: "Every agent that cannot be resisted moves of necessity. But God cannot be resisted, because His power is infinite; wherefore it is written (Rom. 9: 19): 'Who resisteth His will?' Therefore God moves the will of necessity."

The holy Doctor does not reply that the divine motion is infallible because of the foreknowledge of our consent. He says: *"The divine will not only extends so far that anything be done by that which moves it; but that it also be done in the same way as befits its nature.* And therefore it would be more repugnant to the divine motion, if the will were moved of necessity, which is not befitting to its nature, than if it *were moved freely,* as befits its nature." (Cf. Ia, q. 19, a. 8.) God by His infinite power produces in us and *with us* even to the free mode of our act, when He moves us to determine in a certain way rather than in a certain other.

6th obj. St. Thomas states an objection, the very one the Molinists always put to the *Bannesians* and is as follows: "It is possible and so granted nothing impossible follows from this; but something impossible follows, if it is granted that the will does not will this to which God moves it, because according to this, God's operation would be inefficacious; it is not therefore possible for the will not to will this to which God moves it: therefore it must of necessity will it." In other words: "If man's will is first of all moved by God, it follows that man has not the free choice of his acts."

The reply found in the *Summa* is no less categorical than the replies Bannez gave later on: *"If God moves the will to anything, it*

[20] See Ia IIae, q. 112, a. 2; cf. q. 111, a. 2.

is incompossible with this supposition, that the will be not moved thereto. But it is not impossible simply. Consequently it does not follow that the will is moved by God necessarily." [21] Likewise in Ia IIae, q. 112, a. 3, he says: "Man's preparation for grace, as it is from God the mover, has a necessity—not indeed of coercion, but of infallibility—as regards what it is ordained to by God, since God's intention cannot fail, according to the saying of Augustine that by *God's good gifts whoever is liberated is most certainly liberated.*"

In *De malo,* q. 6, a. 1 ad 3, St. Thomas replies to the same objection, saying: *"God moves indeed the will immutably on account of the efficacy of the moving power* [22] which cannot fail; but *on account of the nature of the will that is moved,* which is indifferently disposed to various things, the will is not *necessitated but it remains free,* as also in all things divine Providence *infallibly* operates; and yet from contingent causes effects proceed *contingently* inasmuch as God moves all things proportionately, each one according to its way." See also IIa IIae, q. 24, a. 11. When the will is thus infallibly moved to do a certain act, it never does the contrary act, but it retains the *power* to do it (*remanet potentia ad oppositum*) [23] on account of the dominating actual indifference which it possesses with regard to particular good to which it is inclined. Thus *infallibly* is not *necessarily;* we say: I shall see you tomorrow infallibly, that is to say, without fail, and we go freely to the place of meeting.

7th obj. Even if our will by reason of its universal scope goes beyond particular good to which it is inclined, if God infallibly moves it to tend toward Him, the act is no longer a free one. It is not necessitated on the part of the object which is incapable of invincibly attracting it, but it is so on the part of the First Agent. St. Thomas, moreover,

[21] See Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 4 ad 3.

[22] And not because of the foreseen consent.

[23] Cf. St. Thomas, *De carit.,* a. 12: "The Holy Spirit worketh (in the soul) dividing to every one according as He will as is said in I Cor. 12: 11. Therefore to whom the Holy Spirit according to His pleasure wills to give the persevering motion of divine love, sin which excludes charity cannot be in these. I say that it *cannot be* on the part of the motive power, although it *can* be on the part of the changeableness of the free will." Molina will say on the contrary that "there can be no sin in these because of their good consent eternally foreseen." Thomas de Lemos, *Panoplia gratiae,* I, 181, shows clearly how Calvinism differs on this point from Thomism, and this in five ways, and above all in that it denies our free co-operation with the divine action in us. See *supra,* p. 359.

states this objection in Ia, q. 83, a. 1, obj. 3: "What is free is *cause of itself;* therefore what is moved by another is not free." He replies: "Free will is the cause of its own movement, because by his free will man *moves himself* to act. *But it does not of necessity belong to liberty* that what is free *should be the first cause of itself,* as neither for one thing to be cause of another need it be the first cause. *God,* therefore, *is the first cause, who moves causes both natural and voluntary.* And just as by moving natural causes He does not prevent their acts being natural, so *by moving voluntary causes He does not deprive their actions of being voluntary,* BUT RATHER IS HE THE CAUSE OF THIS VERY THING IN THEM; for He operates in each thing according to its own nature." Thus only, according to St. Thomas, does one retain the meaning of St. Paul's words: "It is God who worketh in you, both to will and to accomplish" (Phil. 2: 13).

8th obj. But, the Molinists insist, it is also said in the Scripture (Eccli. 15: 14): "God made man from the beginning, and left him in the hand of his own counsel."

To this objection St. Thomas replies in his treatise on Providence, Ia, q. 22, a. 2 ad 4, as follows: "When it is said that God left man to himself, this does not mean that man is exempt from divine providence, but merely that he has *not a prefixed operating* FORCE *determined to only the one effect;* as in the case of natural things, which are only acted upon as though directed by another toward an end, and do not act of themselves, as if they directed themselves toward an end, like rational creatures, through the possession of free will, by which these are able to take counsel and make a choice. Hence it is significantly said: *In the hand of his own counsel.* But since *the very* ACT *of free will is traced to God as to a cause,* it necessarily follows that everything happening from the exercise of free will must be subject to divine providence.

It is impossible to bring out more clearly the distinction between the *free faculty* and *its act.* Our will is universal in its scope because it is specified by universal good; its attitude therefore is one of dominating indifference with regard to a particular good, and the intellect shows the *disproportion* between this and total good. This dominating indifference is not destroyed by the divine motion; on the contrary, this motion causes it to pass from the state of *potential indifference* to that of *actual dominating indifference;* for, at the very moment that it is inclined toward this good, the will dominates the

attraction that this has for it.[24] (Concerning the nature and the diverse characteristics of this motion, cf. Del Prado, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, chs. iii–ix.)

We have already (p. 152, note 85) mentioned the interpretation of St. Thomas given by Cardinals Pecci and Satolli, according to which the divine co-operating motion would not have priority of causality over the activity of the secondary cause. It is, as we said (*ibid.*), manifestly a contradiction of the texts of St. Thomas and just as much so those of Cajetan.[25] Moreover, this interpretation, as Del Prado [26] points out, is a return to Molinism, and is incapable of explaining the following words of St. Paul: *"Who is it that discerns thee? What hast thou which thou hast not received?"*

9th obj. But he who does not receive an intrinsically efficacious grace cannot be saved. St. Thomas states this objection when discussing faith, in IIa IIae, q. 2, a. 5, obj. 1.

He replies that it is only through one's own fault that one is deprived of this grace. The fault precedes at least by a priority of nature.[27] It is the result of our defectibility which God is not bound to remedy; *de facto,* He often does, but not always. (See also *Contra Gentes,* III, ch. clviii.)

No one will fail to grasp the true meaning of these texts, unless he reads St. Thomas only through the eyes of Molina and forgets the passages in which Molina declares that he disagrees with the Angelic Doctor on these questions.

10th obj. "Is it true that the means to snatch souls from vice and

[24] *Potential indifference* is the state of our will, as a faculty (still deprived of its act), with regard to particular goods. *Actual or active dominating indifference* is the type of the *free act* itself; for the moment that it chooses some particular good which the scope of the will infinitely surpasses, it dominates the attraction of this good for it. And instead of destroying this indifference founded on the disproportion between this object and the will, the divine motion *actualizes* it. Cf. Del Prado, *op. cit.*, III, 483.

[25] If we read from beginning to end the texts of Cajetan, on Ia, q. 14, a. 13; q. 19, a. 8, we see that the *previous motion* which he rejects is that which would have a priority of time over the action of the secondary cause, and would presuppose that this secondary cause is deprived of all power of its own. But he admits that the divine co-operating motion has a priority of causality over the activity which belongs properly to our will. On these texts of Cajetan, cf. Del Prado, *op. cit.*, III, 484, 501–507; and Dummermuth, *S. Thomas et doctrina praemotionis physicae*, pp. 501 ff.

[26] *Op cit.*, III, 477, 511 f.

[27] We have already explained this point. See *supra,* pp. 372–384.

encourage them to lead a good life and be saved consists in telling them that *it is no use willing?* The converters of souls, to whatever school they may belong, are unanimous in saying, no. The Fathers of the Church drew practical conclusions from this principle; and the spirit of their preaching, from Hermas to St. Bernard, and of their theoretical teaching, from Origen to St. John Damascene, St. Anselm, and St. Francis de Sales, has been clearly in favor of Molinism." [28] In the main it is very true to say with Father de Régnon that outside the confines of the schools "the firmest Thomists, in the pulpit, in the sacred tribunal, in their oratory, are . . . with the whole Christian populace, humble Molinists."

We have already answered this objection (p. 378, note 126), by saying: "Were St. Augustine and St. Thomas, in their hours of prayer and adoration, humble Molinists? . . . Prayer, preaching, the direction of souls, the more elevated and supernatural they become, the more they use the very terms of the two great doctors of grace. . . . There is no sin committed by another that we could not commit on account of our own frailty; if we have not fallen, if we have persevered, it is undoubtedly because we have labored and struggled; but without God we should have done nothing; and when, with and by His grace, we have acted, we must still say in all truth: *We are unprofitable servants. Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to Thy name give glory.*" (Ps. 113: 1.)

The converters of souls, the saints, well know that, for their preaching to be effective, they must above all *pray* for those whom they are evangelizing, *in order that God may transform* their rebellious wills and strengthen the weak. They know that *the Lord is not impotent* to cause these wills to return to Him. If they believed in this impotence, their prayer would never have that holy boldness which we admire in it. The great converters of souls pray as the Church requires us to pray in the collects of her Missal, in which the intrinsic efficacy of grace is repeatedly affirmed in such expressions as the following: *"That God may compel our rebellious wills. That He may cause the infidels from being unwilling to be willing to believe. That He may direct our heart to good works. That He may give us a good will. That He may convert and draw us to Himself. That He may take from us our heart of stone and give us a heart of flesh, or a docile*

[28] D'Alès, *art. cit.*, p. 27.

one. That He may change our wills and incline them to good." Quite an extensive study could be made of the Missal from this point of view.

The spirit of the preaching and the theoretical teaching of the Fathers of the Church could not be clearly in favor of Molinism which, by its doctrine of an *indifferent* divine concurrence, ends in this conclusion admitted by Molina: *"God is therefore no more the cause of our virtue* than He is of our vice, but both are proposed and willed by us."[29] What deep meaning would there be in the words of our Lord, who said: *"Without me you can do nothing"?* Why could not man boast of his virtue as the Pharisee did? Why must we all pray like the publican, and ask of God *the grace which makes us will salutary good: "Convert me, O Lord, and I shall be converted to Thee. . . . Create a clean heart in me, O God; and renew a right spirit within my bowels* (Ps. 50: 12). *Gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may dwell in me. . . . For when I am weak, then am I powerful"* (II Cor. 12: 9, 10).

The higher the degree of Christian spirituality, the more it insists on the profound meaning of these truths. One may read again, for instance, in the *Imitation of Christ,*[30] the chapter concerning the ef-

[29] *Concordia,* q. 14, a. 13, disp. 23 (Paris ed., 1876, p 196).

[30] *Imitation of Christ,* Bk. III, ch. lv, n. 4: "Oh, how necessary for me, O Lord, is Thy grace, to begin that which is good, to go forward with it, and to accomplish it. For without it I can do nothing; but I can do all things in Thee, when grace strengtheneth me. Oh, grace, truly celestial, without which our own merits are nothing, neither are the gifts of nature to be esteemed. . . . If I be tempted and afflicted with many tribulations, I will fear no evils whilst Thy grace is with me. This alone is my strength, this alone giveth counsel and help. This is more mighty than all my enemies, and wiser than all the wise. . . . What am I without this but a withered branch and a useless trunk, meet only to be cast away?"

Bk. III, ch. iv, n. 2: "Son, never esteem thyself to be anything on account of thy good works. . . . Of thyself thou always tendest to nothing, speedily dost thou fail, speedily art thou overcome, speedily disturbed, speedily dissolved. Thou hast not anything in which thou canst glory, but many things for which thou oughtest to abase thyself; for thou art much weaker than thou canst comprehend."

Bk. III, ch. viii, n. 1: "If I reduce myself, Lord, to mere dust from which I was formed, Thy grace will be favorable to me. . . . It is there Thou showest me to myself: for I am nothing, and I knew it not. If Thou dost leave me to myself, what am I? Nothing but weakness; but if Thou suddenly look upon me, I presently become strong, and am replenished with new joy."

ficacy of divine grace and those other chapters that touch upon this subject. And let anyone read St. Bernard.[31]

The Thomists, within the confines of their schools, do not say: It is no use willing; they repeat the words of the Gospel: "Not every one that saith to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doth the will of my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 7: 21). *This good consent is a matter of utmost importance in the work of salvation; how then can it be exclusively our work?* Why would not the Author of salvation then be the cause only of the bad choice? "It is God who worketh in us, both to will and to accomplish, according to His good will" (Phil. 2: 13). It is not in times of sincere prayer that we forget this truth, but at times of pride and insubordination, when we believe ourselves to be self-sufficient.

A whole book could be written on the difference between the spiritual direction based on the teaching of Saint Augustine and St. Thomas and that based on Molinism. The former is more divine, more supernatural, simpler, and also, whatever it may seem to be at first sight, more exacting. It recommends far more the need of prayer, abandonment to divine Providence, and says: See that you do not resist sufficient grace and good inspirations, and *God will give you the efficacious grace* which will incline you infallibly to good, to make generous sacrifices, to a more and more perfect charity.[32] The

Bk. III, ch. ix: "Son, thou must not ascribe any good to thyself, nor attribute virtue to any man; but give all to God, without whom man has nothing. I have given all, I will also have all again; and with great strictness do I require a return of thanks. This is that truth by which all vain glory is put to flight. And if heavenly grace and true charity come in, there shall be no envy nor narrowness of heart, nor shall self-love keep possession. For divine charity overcometh all, and enlargeth all the powers of the soul. Hope in me alone, for none is good but God alone."

[31] St. Bernard, *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, chs. viii and xiv; nothing will be found that is favorable to the doctrine formulated later on by Molina.

[32] On this point, see what we said *supra*, pp. 371–373, 381–383, how we must apply here, as in the case of justification, the Aristotelian principle that *"causes mutually interact though in a different order."*

Our defect, in the order of material causality, precedes God's refusal of actual efficacious grace. We must be careful to avoid this defect which comes from our own defectibility. And then we shall find realized in us the principle that, *to those who do their best* (with actual grace), God *does not deny the* (effective) *grace.* Such is manifestly the interpretation which St. Thomas gives to the proposition. Cf. Ia IIae, q. 112, a. 3. But it is quite certain that we must not

latter is more human, more complicated, more external; it inclines the soul rather to examine itself than to see God's action in us; it is consequently less exacting (probabilism), for one cannot ask much from a man who cannot rely upon God in coming to a firm resolution and keeping it. There is much that could be learned from Bossuet on this point,[33] and one would see that authors of the spiritual life who had to receive their training in the Molinist or Congruist school, have been led, by reason of the sublime topics they were treating and the souls they were directing, to speak of fidelity to grace and abandonment to Providence like most convinced Thomists.[34]

The objection against Thomism is that it is a discouraging doctrine. Instead of being opposed to the virtue of hope, it induces us to place all our trust in God and not in ourselves. On the other hand, what is there more discouraging than the doctrine which would have to result in maintaining that God is *powerless* in certain circumstances to keep us from falling into certain defects and cause us to will what is good? [35] Interior tranquillity and peace of mind depend upon the divine action in which we place our trust. How could we hope to reach heaven, if God could give us only an *indifferent* grace, and if we had to *make it efficacious* by the effort of our own poor and inconstant will: *Is not our salvation incomparably more assured in God's hands than in our own?*

We quote, as a footnote on this subject, the appropriate reflections

wait for a *sign* that God is giving us His efficacious grace; we must act as soon as duty calls us or conscience prompts us.

[33] Bossuet, *Elévations,* 18th week, 15th elevation; *Médit. sur l'Ev.,* Part II, 72d day; *Défense de la tradition,* Bks. V, VI, X, XII. See index to his works, under the words *"grâce"* and *"prédestination."*

[34] Cf. for instance Father Grou, S.J., *Maximes spirituelles,* 2d maxim: "Grace alone can free us from the slavery of sin and assure us of true liberty. Hence it follows that the more the will submits itself to grace, the more it does everything on its part to make itself absolutely, completely, and continually dependent, the more free it will be. . . . Thus everything consists for it in resigning itself in God's hands, in not using its own activity except for the purpose of being more dependent on Him. . . . Is not our salvation incomparably more assured in the hands of God than in our own? . . . After all, what can we do to save ourselves except what God enables us to do?" See also Father de Caussade, S.J., *L'Abandon à la Providence;* Father Lallemant, S.J., *La Doctrine spirituelle,* fourth principle, *"La docilité à la conduite du Saint-Esprit,"* chs. i, ii.

[35] This is what John of St. Thomas, Gonet, and Billuart point out in their commentaries on Ia, q. 14, concerning the *scientia media.*

made by a religious soul, after reading the questions of St. Thomas' *Summa* which refer to the divine will and predestination.[36]

Final obj. Perhaps we must say that St. Thomas did not solve the problem as to how the infallibility of the divine motion is not contrary to our liberty, and this would justify, in case of necessity, the attempts that were made after the Council of Trent to supplement the

[36] "There were moments in which, after reading in St. Thomas what concerned the will of God, above all predestination, I was seized with a great fright, for I could not see my way to admit these things. But there again I called upon love and confidence to help me, and I am at peace.

"God loves all souls. To each He gives sufficient graces for salvation, and if we bring damnation upon ourselves it is through our own wilful defects. True, God gives more graces to some than to others. He is free. But He is good to all. He is Wisdom, Holiness, Goodness itself. It is because we are unwilling to correspond with His graces that He ceases to give them to us.

"Formerly I believed, and I think I was wrong, that God gave us more graces and predestined us, because He saw in advance, in His infinite foreknowledge, that we would correspond with His graces; but, after I have read St. Thomas, it seems to me that this way of thinking is false and takes away something from God, so as to make us rely more on ourselves, and that it is better to abandon ourselves to Him who wishes our good and infinitely loves us, assured that He does not wish to damn anyone. How good it is to profit by these questions, so agonizing and troublesome, *so that we may trust more in Him who can do all things* who loves us and whom we wish to love! If He gives us a certain desire, that desire is from Him, and it is not for us to reject it; *by the prayer that He will cause us to utter, He will give us the grace that is efficacious, fidelity, love, perseverance.*

"At times, on seeing such a change in my soul, I am afraid of attributing something of this to myself and I would *not* like to *take away the least part from God.* In order to grant me these graces of peace of mind and abandonment to His will, He waited until I fully realized that *everything, everything comes from Him. Formerly I relied too much on myself,* and well do I know this; now *I rely* on His divine strength. *He is my strength and my salvation.*

"How inconceivable are the divine predilections! . . . I cannot doubt those of the good God for me, nor can I doubt that they are gratuitous. . . . Thousands of times I would have deserved to be abandoned and repulsed by Him, yet He draws me ever more closely to Him, and the more He does so, the more I see how much I have betrayed Him and what a wretched life I have led as a religious, and I see it all so well, and my soul is stirred with a deep sense of gratitude for these countless benefits. . . . My sufferings, too, seem nothing to me. . . . The only real suffering is to see God so outraged, even by those who believe and who wish to love Him . . . and by me. The other sufferings must be courageously offered up in sacrifice. That is true immolation."

teaching of Catholic theology on this point of such grave consequence.[37]

Reply: In favor of this point of view, Father d'Alès quotes a text of Cajetan,[38] which states practically what St. Thomas himself had written. It is that the solution of the problem is to be found in the *transcendent efficacy* of the divine causality which is essentially a mystery for us. Bossuet says the same thing: "We hold the two ends of the chain." This does not prevent him from expressing himself very plainly in his *Traité du libre arbitre* (chs. vi, viii) against the *scientia media,* and in favor of the divine predetermining decrees, "of physical premotion and predetermination. This perfectly vindicates," he says, "our liberty and dependence on God."

The fundamental difference between the two doctrines is that, for St. Thomas, in the created liberty there is certainly a dominating indifference with regard to all good which does not plainly appeal to it *hic et nunc* as infinite good: but it cannot *produce its act or determine itself independently of God,* who is the First Cause, the First Liberty, the Author of all good. Whereas for the Molinists, it is of the essence of the free act that its immediate cause, the created will, does not depend, as to the determination of its choice, *on any influence of the divine action.* But this definition of liberty cannot be proved *either by experience or by reason.*[39] Moreover, it rests upon a *begging*

[37] D'Alès, *art. cit.,* p. 24.

[38] Cajetan, on Ia, q. 22, a. 4, n. 8.

[39] Cf. Guillermin, *L'Opuscule de son Eminence le Cardinal Pecci,* p. 59: "Conscience and reason attest nothing of the kind. Conscience perceives positively only one thing, which is that we are the *immediate principle of what we determine to do.* . . . Far from denying this, the Thomists assert that physical premotion causes us to act in one particular way rather than in a certain other. They deny only one thing: that we are not *the first and independent principle* in *the determination of our choice.* On this latter point, conscience says nothing and can have nothing to say. Nor has it anything to say about the preservative act by which God continually keeps us in existence. We should not conclude, because of this, that we owe to ourselves, independently of any higher principle, the existence that we have.

"As for philosophic reason, harking back beyond the intrinsic principles of the free act, it comes to the conclusion that no creature in its acts can rid itself of the actual influence of the First Mover, that no creature can be the first cause of anything but imperfection and defect. We must therefore refer to God, as to the First Cause, everything that there is in our choice, of motion, perfection, reality, and positive determination."

of the *question,* and we protest against it by reason of the universal and transcendent supereminence of the divine causality.

Father d'Alès proposed to us a frank exchange of views. No advance has been made for the last three centuries concerning the present question. It is even painful to see Catholic theologians positing principles fruitful of errors so enormous as those of fatalism. The enemies of the faith could take advantage of these disagreements.

And yet in a debate on the truth of a doctrine we cannot treat it as if it were a discussion between business men who must, to come to an agreement, grant some favorable concessions. On the question of *the fidelity* to *St. Thomas,* the only thing that the Dominicans can admit is that their doctrine does not differ in the least degree from that of their master. The Molinists are not obliged to follow the Angelic Doctor on this point. Molina frankly avows that he separates from him. But how can the Molinists claim that we are the ones who depart from St. Thomas and that we are only followers of Bannez? Not only theologians, but Superiors General of the Order of Preachers, and the most patient of them, have replied: That is a calumny.[40]

The only possible way of reconciling the two doctrines is to begin by examining them *from the point of view of method,* guided by general and evident rules which are accepted by both sides. We should have to see which of the two systems starts from the known in order to arrive at the unknown, from evident and absolutely universal first principles (like the principles of causality and the universal causality of the first agent), so as to solve an obscure question without a begging of the question. There would still be many profound obscurities in the two systems thus compared and it will always be so in this life. But among these obscurities one could distinguish between those which are the result of a want of method and in which there is a contradiction, and those which result from the transcendence of the

[40] Cf. Cormier, *In Memoriam VII Centenarii ab Approbatione Ordinis FF. Praedicatorum Disceptatio,* Appendix III, p. 110: "Dominicus Bannes, d. 1604. He was a most famous Professor and Magister in the University of Salamanca, and it is to his credit that he deserved to be attacked most vehemently by the opponents of the Thomist School, not by the weapons of knowledge but by those of calumny, so much so that his explanations of the teaching of St. Thomas were given in contempt the name of *Bannesianism* instead of *Thomism.* It is a vain hope indeed."

divine action which is too luminous for our feeble sight.[41] This comparison of the two systems has been given by us (*supra*, pp. 87–90, 387).

St. Thomas starts from the first principles of reason about causality and the first principles of theology about God, the Author of salvation. He is thus led to this conclusion: *Our free wills are moved infallibly and freely by God, and whatever good there is in their acts depends upon God.* He sees in this one of the most sublime of mysteries, which is that God is by His causality more intimate to creatures than they are to themselves.

Molinism, on the contrary, starts out by affirming that there is in this conclusion a manifest absurdity, and not a sublime mystery. It is thus led to deny the absolute universality and necessity of the first principles of reason and theology, without succeeding, moreover, in safeguarding free will that is destroyed by the determinism of the circumstances implied in the theory of the *scientia media.*

Besides, there still remains, even for Molina, the profound obscurity of the mystery of predestination; for he is bound to teach that it depends solely upon God's good pleasure that Peter is placed in circumstances in which he will infallibly be saved, and Judas in another arrangement of circumstances in which he will infallibly be lost. The divine good pleasure could have made the choice in the reverse order.[42] Apart from these circumstances, it is none the less true for Molina that this one is saved without having been *more aided* by grace than a certain other who is lost. From this point of view God does not help the elect more than He does the reprobates.[43] And therefore

[41] It is in this manner that Father Lepidi concludes a study on *the voluntary activity of man and the divine causality.* Cf. *Opuscules philosophiques,* ch. i. See also Father Gardeil, O.P., *Le Donné révélé et la théologie,* 1910, Part II, ch. iii, *"Les systèmes théologiques."*

[42] *Concordia,* q. 23, a. 4, 5, disp. 1, membr. 13, p. 549: "The fourth is that God willed to establish this order of things rather than some other, and in it to confer these particular helps rather than certain others, by which He foresaw that these particular persons and not certain others, because of their wills being free, will attain to eternal life, there being no cause or reason for this on the part of those either predestined or numbered among the reprobate. And for this reason we have gone so far as to say that there is no cause or reason for predestination on the part of the free will of those either predestined or numbered among the reprobate, but this is to be referred solely to the free will of God."

[43] *Concordia,* q. 23, a. 4, 5, disp. 1, membr. 11, p. 526: "With the helps given by God, by which one is justified and saved, another by reason of his

what is greatest in the created order, the free determination of the good consent, comes *solely* from us and not from God. "Hence God is no more the cause of our virtue than of our vice, but it is proposed and willed by us." [44] How does God remain truly the Author of our salvation? Why must we trust in Him and not in ourselves? After offending against this principle, Molinism does not save free will, but radically compromises it by determinism of circumstances which is implied in the *scientia media*. It procures very precarious advantages at a very dear price.

Generally in all the great philosophical and theological problems, above errors that are extreme and opposite in type (in this case Pelagianism on the one hand, and Predestinationism on the other), two doctrines meet: the one rises like a towering peak, being a superior synthesis of the diverse aspects of the true, and is founded on principles and a very exalted notion of God; the other which is eclectic, remains midway between this summit and the divagations of error. Being less concerned with principles than with the solution of objections, it juxtaposes its theses instead of subordinating them, and often avoids contradiction only by literary processes and a series of fluctuations which are not sufficiently in keeping with the rules of logic.

This difference between Thomism and Eclecticism could easily enough be shown,[45] as regards the problem of universals, those of

free will is neither justified nor saved. . . . Nor is it to be doubted that many are tormented in hell who were given by God far greater helps for salvation, than many who in heaven enjoy seeing God face to face."

[44] *Concordia, loc. cit.*, p. 196. On the Molinist doctrine of predestination, cf. Del Prado, *op. cit.*, III, 187–261.

[45] Molinism and the doctrine of Suarez are certainly in harmony with this eclecticism which generally refuses to declare itself plainly either in favor of St. Thomas or in favor of Scotus. Its followers are to be found mostly among authors of a Nominalist tendency who see facts without being impressed by the formal reasons of things, who consequently do not sufficiently take into account the differences, of a very profound nature, to be found in the hierarchy of beings, and who are somewhat inclined to put all things on the same level. This want of elevation or profundity of doctrine may be veiled sometimes by elegance of style in the explanation, and by the writer's moral and religious qualities, but on careful consideration one soon detects it. There are theologians who, by the interior life they lead, are above the theological system they profess; unfortunately there are also some of the opposite kind. The doctrine we profess may be sublime, yet we may be leading a rather mediocre life; this robs the doctrine of that radiance and splendor which attracts souls.

analogy, of unity of the notion of being, of the distinction between essence and existence, of the divine causality, of deliberation (the rôle of the final practical judgment), of the foundation for moral obligation (natural law), of questions that relate to conscience, of that of the essential supernaturalness (*ratione objecti formalis*) of infused faith, and other questions.[46] These are the occasion of so many controversies that are interesting for those who would be of an argumentative turn of mind. But too often these controversies are fruitless. Preferable, so it seems, is a profound and methodical exposition of what appears to us to be the truth. This latter, once it is demonstrated, is its own defense.

In spite of the impossibility of reconciling the two doctrines of St. Thomas and Molina, we will not say to our adversaries: "Between us and you there is fixed a great chaos (Luke, 16: 26)." If God is truly the master of created free wills, if He is the First Cause of their determinations, the Author of all the good that they contain, if His motion is not indifferent to good and evil, to the good and bad consent, may He deign to give us the gift of expressing this truth without in any way offending against charity toward those who may fail to perceive it.

This controversy would, we believe, become more fruitful, if there were a more pronounced tendency to take a stand, not only on the terrain of theological speculation, but also on that of spirituality. Perhaps from this very exalted and entirely supernatural point of view, the two sides might succeed in coming to an agreement concerning the truly traditional answer which alone can satisfy the legitimate claims, not only of the mind, but also of the soul and conscience of everyone. The works of the most esteemed spiritual authors might facilitate this reconciliation.[47]

We have written these pages with the sole purpose of stating

[46] We have already discussed the first three of these problems. See *supra*, pp. 190–268: for what concerns deliberation, pp. 269–338. The problem of supernatural nature of theological faith is discussed in the *Revue thomiste*, January 1914, pp. 17–39, and in *De revelatione*, chapter entitled "Credibility." On the questions concerning conscience, cf. Beaudoin, O.P., *Tractatus de conscientia* (1911 ed.), *de conscientia probabili*, pp. 65–137; see also Father Mandonnet's articles on Probabilism, in the *Revue thomiste*, 1901, 1902.

[47] With this end in view, one could read with profit, among the spiritual writers of the Society of Jesus, the books of Fathers Lallemant, de Caussade, and Grou, which we have quoted. On several points they are much like the spiritual

clearly what St. Thomas really thought. Now, on this grave problem, as Father d'Alès (p. 2) very truly acknowledges, "The teaching of the Church posits for Christians, the double fundamental equation: St. Paul = St. Augustine = St. Thomas."

CHAPTER IV

The Results of this Controversy

In the preceding pages we have endeavored to prove that the judgment passed upon Molina's doctrine by the Thomist theologians is based upon an exact knowledge of this doctrine, that it is directed to the formal point at issue, and that it has never been refuted.[1]

Father d'Alès, in his reply to this tractate which we have just reprinted, wrote another article of sixty-three pages, entitled: *Autour de Molina,*[2] in which he strives to maintain his views, but by insisting on the efficacy of grace, as much as he can, so as to solve the difficulties proposed to him.

Often these discussions are altogether futile. This one has not been

books written a century later by such Thomists as Massoulié (*Traité de l'oraison; Traité de l'amour de Dieu*), and Piny (*De l'abandon à la volonté de Dieu*).

[1] To show that we have not in the least exaggerated the criticism that the Thomists have always made of the Molinist theory of the *scientia media,* it will suffice to quote the titles that Father Gonet, O.P., places at the head of his sections which treat of this question in his *Clypeus thomisticae theologiae,* disp. 6, a. 6. The *scientia media,* because of its absurdities and incongruities, is an exploded theory. Secs. 1, 2: The *scientia media* seems to favor and prepare the way for the Semi-Pelagian error; sec. 3: *The scientia media does not acknowledge that God is the First Cause;* sec. 4: The scientia media does not acknowledge that God is the first free Being; sec. 5: The scientia media *does not acknowledge God's supreme dominion over our wills;* sec. 6: The scientia media *detracts from the divine omnipotence* and weakens the efficacy of grace; secs. 7, 8: The *scientia media* attributes to God a mode of concurrence with free causes that is blind and nescient, vague and indeterminate; sec. 9: *The scientia media apparently favors free will; but in truth it does away with it* and in its first principle stifles or extinguishes it; sec. 10: The *scientia media* makes *God equally the cause of good deeds and of evil deeds.*

We find the same criticism by John of St. Thomas, in his commentary on Ia, q. 14. The *Salmanticenses* in their commentary on this same article, *Cardinal Gotti, Billuart,* all theologians of the Thomist school whose works are commonly quoted, say the same.

[2] *Recherches de science religieuse,* October–December 1917.

entirely unprofitable. We hasten to say that our opponent has every appearance of being a Thomist when it is not a question of the *auxilia divina*. As he had already said (p. 503) and as we knew, he is hardly a Suarezian. He admits a real distinction between essence and existence in creatures, considers it as the corner-stone of the metaphysical edifice. He firmly accepts the twenty-four Thomist theses recently proposed by the Sacred Congregation of Studies. We believe most sincerely what he says in addition to this, that, "if God had made me a Dominican, I would probably be considered a good Thomist." As we shall see, he even makes three important concessions on the divine concurrence and foreknowledge. He seeks, however, to hold fast to what, in his eyes, is essential in the Molinist conceptions of efficacious grace and the *scientia media*, at the same time granting that our interpretation of St. Thomas is more literal.[3] Father d'Alès is certainly a man of keen intellect and vast erudition, as his historical works prove. He is also an expert in handling the weapon of irony so as to get out of an argument when cornered. But these brilliant qualities only show the more clearly, so we think, the impossibility in which he finds himself of solving the objections formulated by the Thomists for more than three centuries. He appears to us to be combating the evidence of the principle of causality. No wonder he is obliged to flee in every direction, forced to sway to and fro, without managing to hold himself down to the main point of the dispute.

Certainly we shall never be able to reconcile the two doctrines. What we can do for either side, is to insist less on their opposition. This consists in taking note of all that the Thomists attribute to human liberty in the work of salvation and of all that the Molinists finally concede concerning the efficacy of grace.

With this end in view, let us examine for the last time the answer given to the three fundamental criticisms formulated by the Thomists. It is indeed, "to the true Molina of history" that their words are ad-

[3] D'Alès, pp. 502 f. Likewise Father Ledochowski, Superior General of the Society of Jesus, in a pamphlet of his entitled, *De doctrina S. Thomae magis magisque in Societate fovenda*, p. 44, wrote as follows: "These statements are not at all intended against *those who think they should most strictly follow the Angelic Doctor*, since we are persuaded that also this resolution is most beneficial to the Church. But this is not the common rule. It appears, however, that the Society accommodates itself more to the common way, though more closely hemmed in by certain precepts, and hence it pursues a *somewhat middle course* in the present disputes." The italics are ours.

dressed, and Father d'Alès has not been able to show that men like John of St. Thomas, the Salmanticenses, Gonet, Gotti, Dummermuth, Del Prado, did not know Molinism as it really is, or that they distorted it in order to gain the victory more easily.

Just a word about the particularly sharp tone and a certain attitude of our opponent. If Father d'Alès had had good reasons to give, he would not have departed from his usual calm and courtesy; he would not have said that we cannot understand Molinism because we do not like it. Above all, he would not have insinuated that we quote Molina according to Father del Prado, without having taken the trouble to study him in his own text. This is utterly contrary to the truth.[4] But let us return to the three objections raised against the Molinists.

[4] Father del Prado's usual way is to quote Molina's *Concordia* according to the division of the *disputations,* without reference to any particular edition. I have, on the contrary, always referred to the Paris edition (1876) in quoting Molina's work, as everyone can easily consult it. Frequently I add, in a footnote, a reference to Del Prado, *De gratia,* Vol. III. This I do to show that these texts of Molina, which we could merely refer to in a short treatise, were examined at length and compared with those of St. Thomas in Del Prado's work, and the validity of these texts is incontestable to every unprejudiced mind.

Incidentally, it is true that in our pamphlet, *S. Thomas et le néomolinisme,* p. 15, we quoted, solely according to Father del Prado, a text which occurs in the edition of the *Concordia* published at Lisbon in 1588. Not having this edition at our disposal, we were unable to compare it with the Paris edition, and we too readily concluded that the Paris edition no longer contained this passage referring to the doctrine of St. Thomas about predestination. However, we attached only slight importance to this remark, for we said (p. 15): "We set aside the texts in which Molina affirms that the doctrine of St. Thomas on predestination appears to him to be too harsh."

Under cover of this accidental material error, Father d'Alès insinuates that I quote Molina solely according to Father del Prado, and that I see Molina only through the criticisms of this theologian. According to the way in which our opponent quotes St. Thomas—of this later—it would be as easy to say to him that he sees St. Thomas only through Molina.

But, Reverend Father, even then, if I quoted the *Concordia,* only according to the Thomist theologians, would *anything* follow from this that is *contrary to their well-founded criticisms which I state?* You ought to show that these theologians were ignorant of the Molinist doctrine, and you do not succeed in doing this. All the texts that you single out in the *Concordia* were already known to us, and the ordinary student of theology can find them by consulting the index of the Paris edition, under the words *"auxilium"* and *"gratia."*

ARTICLE I

THE UNIVERSAL CAUSALITY OF GOD

Does Molinism restrict the universality of the divine causality? We say that it does restrict it, because Molina (*Concordia,* Paris ed., 1876, pp. 152 ff., 158) rejects the doctrine of St. Thomas (Ia, q. 105, a. 5) according to which, for the secondary cause to act it needs to be premoved, applied to its act by God who is the First Cause.

Father d'Alès (p. 452) makes this concession: "That Molina did not understand this beautiful doctrine of St. Thomas, is to be regretted, profoundly so; we have no idea of dissimulating on this point." But it is from this, so the Thomists say,[5] that the differences concerning the efficacy of grace and the foreknowledge of free acts originate.

Consequently we said that Molina, believing himself to have the authority of St. Justin Martyr on his side, approved the following proposition: "*Therefore our virtuous acts* as also our vicious acts *are caused, not by God,* but by our intent" (*Concordia,* p. 196). This proposition, of undoubted Pelagian origin, is a contradiction of canons 20 and 22 of the Council of Orange.

Father d'Alès avows (p. 456) that "the *Quaestiones et responsiones ad orthodoxos* have a rather bad name and it is generally agreed that they must be recognized to be of Pelagian origin." But he believes that Molina has interpreted the above-mentioned proposition in a Catholic sense. We hope so indeed; the words, however, have a fixed meaning, and it is all the more difficult to interpret this phrase in an orthodox sense, since it is negative. It is difficult to see how anybody can find a parallel for it in the following words of the Savior, which are invoked for the purpose of evading a difficulty: "If thou wilt be perfect, go sell what thou hast . . . and come follow me. How often would I have gathered together thy children, as the hen doth gather her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldest not" (Matt. 19: 21; 23: 37). If the young man in the Gospel, if Jerusalem, had responded to our Lord's appeal, who could maintain that it was not God, but only the created will that was the cause of these virtuous acts? The proposition, therefore, as it stands, has an absolutely unacceptable

[5] Cf. Del Prado, *De gratia et libero arbitrio,* Vol. III, ch. iii, *Primum principium Concordiae: Concursus simultaneus,* pp. 58–86.

meaning. If, inadvertently, Molina approved of it, this is because he did not entertain a sufficiently high idea of the divine causality.

Father d'Alès then reproaches us for paying attention, in the *Concordia,* only to texts that refer to God's general concurrence, and for neglecting those that affirm the *special concurrence* of prevenient and co-operating grace. He says we do this "because Father del Prado looks upon these texts as non-existent" (p. 461).

We have but to open Father del Prado's book on Molina to find in it several chapters occupied with the examination of Molinistic texts *concerning God's special influx,* which he compares at length with the texts of St. Thomas, then with those of the Congruists.[6] In their classical treatises on *efficacious actual grace,* precisely in those places where they criticize Molina for restricting God's universal causality, how could the Thomists, as a general rule, have neglected the Molinistic texts that refer to the question?

The Salmanticenses, for instance, like the Dominican theologians, begin their treatise *De gratia efficaci*[7] by quoting texts from Molina; they remind us that according to him grace is not of itself intrinsically efficacious, but is so only because it is followed by the good consent foreseen by the *scientia media* in such a way that, if *absolutely equal* prevenient and excitant *graces* are given to two men, it happens that one is converted and the other not; for the first, the same grace was efficacious, for the other, it remained inefficacious. Such is indeed the doctrine of the true Molina of history,[8] as Father d'Alès admits.[9] The

[6] Del Prado, *De gratia et libero arbitrio,* Vol. III, ch. iv, *Secundum principium Concordiae: Influxus Dei specialis,* pp. 86–117; chs. ix, x. The *Concordia* of Molina, whitewashed by Congruism, has not changed its appearance, pp. 339–426.

[7] Salmanticenses, Tract. 14, *De gratia,* disp. 7, *De gratia efficaci,* dub. 1.

[8] Molina, *Concordia,* Paris ed., Index: *Auxilium:* Graces of themselves efficacious are not to be admitted, pp. 356, 460; Graces that are efficacious depend upon the free will, and are to be understood in this sense, p. 462. The grace being *equal,* it can happen that one is converted, and that another is not. Aided by a *less* grace, one can rise again, while another with a *greater* grace does not, and remains obdurate, p. 565.

D'Alès (p. 470) attempts to parallel these propositions with that of St. Thomas (IIIa, q. 62, a. 6 ad 3): "With the least grace one is able to resist whatsoever concupiscence and merit eternal life." But it is clear, according to the principles of St. Thomas (cf., *e.g.,* Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 4 ad 3), that this last phrase applies in a different way to sufficient and intrinsically efficacious graces; with the first we *can* resist every temptation, the second causes us to resist *effectively.*

[9] Cf. D'Alès, p. 469, note 2: "We say that (grace) is efficacious a posteriori,

Salmanticenses, though careful not to inflict any theological censure on this doctrine, prove and conclude that this teaching is opposed to that of St. Augustine and St. Thomas, and that it detracts from the divine causality, so as to attribute solely to our free will that which distinguishes the just man from the sinner; *"it would follow that the difference between the one consenting and the one not consenting is to be ascribed not to grace, but to the free will."* [10]

This is what we ourselves had said, and it is truly with the *special concurrence* that we were concerned, according to the very terminology of the *Concordia* (p. 526), when we wrote: "Apart from this indifferent motion, God would but entice us to good by good inspirations which He gives also to the wicked; with *absolutely equal divine help,* one man would follow the good inspirations and another would resist it." [11] And we said further: "God would thus be a stranger to the determination of the free will which is the consummation of the work of salvation." [12]

Father d'Alès mentions our text (pp. 453 f.), but he forgets to insert the inverted commas and the reference to Molina. He also finds our last phrase absolutely unjust. According to him, from the fact

because according to Molina's view, the divine foreknowledge of man's answer is what distinguishes efficacious grace from that which is not so, and the divine means of being assured of this efficacy." Father d'Alès (p. 496) quotes the principal text of Molina; it is found in the *Concordia,* p. 462.

[10] Salmanticenses, *loc. cit.,* sec. 4, n. 17: "If the efficacy of grace depended upon the effect, and there was no antecedent cause, it would follow that the difference between the one consenting and the one not consenting is to be ascribed not to grace but to the free will. This contradicts what the Apostle says in I Cor. 4: 7: *"For who distinguisheth thee? Or what hast thou that thou hast not received? And if thou hast received, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?"* The following illustrates this: Let us give two men the same sufficient prevenient grace; then in the opinion of Molina it can be that, without any further help, one consents, the other does not . . . and this actual difference cannot be ascribed to grace, if indeed each received the same grace, as is supposed. Therefore it must be ascribed not to grace, but to the free will."

[11] *Concordia,* p. 526: "Finally, because with God's help, by which one is justified and saved, another of his own accord is neither justified nor saved and on the other hand . . . that *these with more abundant graces were not predestined and saved, but those with less grace were predestined and saved,* no other reason is to be assigned except that *those of their own innate free will* refused so to make use of it as to obtain salvation: but the others by all means did so."

[12] Pamphlet, *S. Thomas et le néomolinisme,* p. 9, and here too, in this appendix, ch. i, a. 1 (p. 470).

that, with *absolutely equal* prevenient and excitant actual *graces,* one is converted and another not, it does not follow that God remains a stranger to the determination of the good consent. "In the first case," he says (p. 459), "that of conversion, the free creature is moved and determines itself under the very influence of the positive motion of excitant grace; before even its act comes into being, its determination is called forth by God. In the second case, this determination belongs to it in its own right, in virtue of a purely permissive divine decree."

That is equivalent to saying with Lessius (*De gratia efficaci,* ch. xviii, n. 7), quoted here by the *Salmanticenses,* n. 18: "that of two persons called in a like manner, one of whom accepts, the other rejects the proffered grace, this is rightly said to be due *to free will alone;* not that he who accepts does so of his own free will; but *the difference that arises* is solely the result of free will, so that it is not because of the diversity of prevenient grace. Here the word *'alone'* does not exclude co-operation . . . but only the diversity of prevenient grace."

But we shall always say with the Carmelites of Salamanca: [18] This doctrine cannot be upheld; it is contrary to the spirit and words of St. Paul, for whom not only the divine attraction is what prompts the just man to act, but also the initial distinction which differentiates the just man from the sinner comes from grace: *"For who distinguisheth thee? Or what hast thou that thou hast not received?"* (I Cor. 4: 7.) From this it would follow that something real and of supreme importance in the order of salvation, the difference between the just man and the sinner, depends on the created free will as *its first cause.* What would take place in the created will that is most intimate to it, at the precise moment of responding or not responding to the solicitation of grace, would come solely from the created free will. The first step in the acceptance or refusal of grace would come exclusively from us, since it would depend *solely upon us* that our action in the presence of such supernatural attractions be either obedience or revolt.

[18] Salmanticenses, *De gratia,* disp. 7, de gratia efficaci, dub. 1, sec. 4, n. 18: "This doctrine cannot be upheld; both because it is contrary to the spirit and intent of the Apostle when he says: *'For who distinguisheth thee?'* and also because the Apostle immediately proves that what distinguishes one person from another does not come from man but from God, saying: *'What hast thou that thou hast not received?'* "

We never misunderstood this doctrine of Molina. It comes to this, as Father del Prado has shown,[14] that such a conception of prevenient and adjuvant grace means that it does not apply the will to give its good consent, does not infallibly move the will to determine itself for good rather than evil; it merely solicits the consent of the will. The simultaneous general concurrence does not explain, furthermore, the *transition* of the free cause *to act*, a point which, as we have seen, was conceded to us; this transition to act as such, takes place, therefore, apart from the divine causality, and as the (undetermined) potency cannot of itself reduce itself to act, this transition is without a cause.

We had even discussed[15] efficacious grace, such as it is conceived by the Congruists, and we have shown that it does not yet solve the objection, since it always remains in the determination of the good consent a first impulse which is to be attributed not to divine causality but solely to ourselves. Hence the necessity of the *scientia media* to enable God to foresee this free determination, which grace cannot infallibly produce in us and with us.

Finally, far from confounding Molinism with Semi-Pelagianism, concerning the problem of predestination, we were careful to point out what Father d'Alès seems not to have seen, for we said: "Moreover, there always remains, even for Molina, the profound obscurity of the mystery of predestination, for he must teach that it depends solely on God's good pleasure that Peter is placed in circumstances in which he will infallibly be saved and Judas in another arrangement of circumstances in which he will infallibly be lost; the divine good pleasure could have made the choice the other way about.[16] *Setting aside this choice of circumstances*, it remains no less true for Molina that a certain one is saved without having been *aided more* by grace than a certain other who is lost. From this point of view, God no more helps the elect than He does the reprobate."[17]

It is quite certain that if we had omitted the words "setting aside this choice of circumstances" and "aided more," we should have

[14] *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, III, 98 f.

[15] *S. Thomas et le néomolinisme*, p. 8, note 3; in this appendix, ch. i, a. 1, note 6 (p. 470).

[16] Molina, *Concordia*, q. 23, p. 549.

[17] *S. Thomas et le néomolinisme*, pp. 43, 44, and in this appendix, ch. iii, toward the end (p. 505).

gravely misrepresented Molinism. Father d'Alès, in quoting us (p. 455), forgets to quote these words; this omission enables him to subjoin the following query: "How could one have believed for a moment that these things were taught freely in Catholic Schools fifty years after the Council of Trent?"

We maintain, therefore, that Molinism restricts the divine causality, not only because of its theory of a general simultaneous concurrence, but also because it considers grace to be efficacious a posteriori. According to Molinism, grace is efficacious only because God foresees that man will consent, whereas, for St. Thomas, "God indeed moves the will *immutably*, because of the efficacy of the moving power which cannot fail;[18] but because of the nature of the will that is moved, which is indifferently disposed toward various things, it is not necessitated but remains free."[19]

Father d'Alès seeing the difficulty, speaks in certain places about the efficacy of grace like a Thomist, *e. g.*, p. 483, where he says: "All theologians admit that God is not limited in means at His disposal to induce the created will to determine itself freely in a certain way. It is for Him alone to strike Saul down to the ground when Saul was on the way to Damascus, and to break this rebellious will." And even without speaking of extraordinary graces, he adds (pp. 485 f.): "God knows how to attract the creature infallibly to perform a certain good work, by loving it by His grace." He quotes (p. 483, note 1) this text of Molina: "God by His omnipotence is able to move our free will in whatever way He wishes, but not to commit sin." Very good; that is what St. Thomas says; but in vain does Molina seek to reconcile this proposition with that other found on the same page (*Concordia*, p. 318), which is as follows: *"It was in God's power to to know by this scientia (media) only that which He actually knew."* God, supposing the Apostle Peter to be placed in the circumstances of the Passion, *could foresee*, according to Molina, *only* the Apostle's denial. Must we not conclude from this that it was impossible for God to keep Peter from falling in such circumstances? That is why we wrote, not as Father d'Alès quotes us as saying, namely:[20] "what

[18] "And not because of the foreseen consent."

[19] *De malo*, q. 6, a. 1, ad 3.

[20] Father d'Alès (p. 483, note 1) quotes from the proofs, forgetting to note whether the text was corrected before publication. The punctiliousness of the most diligent is at times found to be at fault. We happened to copy incorrectly

is there more discouraging than the doctrine which claims . . .," but "what is there more discouraging than the doctrine by which we would have to maintain that it is *impossible* for God in certain circumstances to keep us from falling into certain defects and cause us to do what is good?" [21]

They criticize us for this, saying that our point of view is a poor explanation of how sin is committed. After writing many pages elsewhere [22] on this subject, we summarized it all by saying: "God certainly cannot be the cause of sin; this, as such, is merely a deficiency; it requires only a deficient cause, preceded by a purely permissive decree of God. The divine motion thus concurs only in the physical act of sin." [23]

Father d'Alès' reply (p. 458) is as follows: "But there remains the physical entity of this resolution (that Judas makes of betraying his Master), and that is a positive act which stands out in bold relief. To call that a deficiency seems to me rather to admit that you are defeated. So little do we call the *physical entity* of the sinful act a deficiency that we have just now precisely distinguished it from this very deficiency, according to the teaching of St. Augustine and St. Thomas. All the Thomists, even the strictest of them, have always admitted this "entity standing out in bold relief." Cf. Ia IIae, q. 79, a. 2. Let us take up the two other criticisms.

a reference to the edition of the *Concordia* published at Lisbon; the same thing happened to Father d'Alès (p. 468), regarding a reference of his to the *De potentia* of St. Thomas, q. 1, a. 5 ad 3; it is, in fact, to be found in article 4. A little farther on (p. 459, note 1) we read: "St. Thomas teaches, not once but always, that *'this very inclination* (of the will) *is determined for it not by another but by itself'* (q. 22, *De veritate*, a. 4). Bannez teaches that *'God is the First Cause in being, power, and determination for all things'* (on Ia, q. 14, a. 13). Father Garrigou-Lagrange thinks that the two teachings are absolutely identical." Father d'Alès has failed to notice that, in the article of the *De veritate* that he quotes, St. Thomas is not considering the will in its relation to the divine motion, but in that which distinguishes it from the sensitive appetite which, indeed, *is determined necessarily by the object* that attracts it. We have quoted, moreover, in the third chapter of this appendix (pp. 487–489), the texts of St. Thomas that refer to the question. They may be compared with those of Bannez to see if they differ.

[21] *S. Thomas et le néomolinisme*, p. 40, and in this appendix, ch. iii, solution of the second last objection, p. 501.

[22] Cf. *supra*, pp. 365–397.

[23] *Op. cit.*, p. 10, and in this appendix, ch. i, a. 1 (p. 472).

ARTICLE II

HOW ARE WE TO AVOID POSITING A PASSIVITY IN THE PURE ACT AND ESCAPE DETERMINISM OF CIRCUMSTANCES?

We had asked ourselves if the theory of the *scientia media* can solve these two difficulties. We still say it cannot, because, according to Molina: "It has never been a part of God's liberty to foresee by His *scientia media* other conditional free acts of the future than those that He has foreseen . . . but if the created free will had to make another choice, as it could do, it is this other choice that God would have to know about." [24]

They reply that this investigation does not posit a *passivity* in the pure Act, since God, according to Molina, derives all His knowledge from Himself and not from creatures. How can He derive from Himself the knowledge of a creature's free conditional determination, the initiative of which in no way comes from Himself? Does not Molina admit that, supposing two men to be placed in the same circumstances, with absolutely equal graces, it happens that one is converted, the other not? He says even that the one who is converted has received at times a less grace than the one who remains in sin (*Concordia,* p. 526).

On this point Father d'Alès (p. 472) confesses that "there is here a material contradiction between the language of Molina and that of

[24] *Concordia,* p. 318: "We must answer by saying that it (the *scientia media*) on no account is to be called free, both because it precedes every free act of the divine will, and also because *it was in God's power to know, by this knowledge, only that which He actually did know.* Then again it must not be called natural even in this sense, as if it were so innate in God that He could not know the contrary of what He knows by it. *For, if the created free will had chosen to do the opposite, as it truly can do, this very thing He would have known by the same knowledge, but not that He actually knows it.*" We admire the infallible serenity with which Molina, a few lines later, adds the following words: "Let not this doctrine trouble you at your first reading of it; remember that all these things that follow from it *are most easily reconciled and logically connected:* there is nothing that the creature can do that God cannot do; God by His omnipotence can move our free will in whatever way He wishes but not to commit sin." It is not infrequent to find in Molina's writings, propositions connected by an *"attamen"* which have always appeared contradictory to the Thomists. We confess that these pages of the *Concordia* are unintelligible to us.

St. Thomas who, on the contrary (Ia, q. 14, a. 13), says that *'the knowledge of God is the cause of things.'"*

To our mind, the contradiction is formal, and we absolutely cannot admit that parity which they seek to establish between the doctrine of St. Thomas and that of Molina concerning the antecedent and consequent will of God.[25] It is not enough to say: "As regards the divine intellect that devises an order of Providence, *a conditionally future resolution* of the creature is *a possible like the others"* (p. 473). It always comes back to this, that the possible is confused with the conditional future. It is however clear that in such given circumstances as those, for instance, of the Passion, there are for Peter *two possibilities,* either to be faithful to his Master, or to deny Him, and only *one conditional future* here. The question for us is to know how God foresees *which of these two possibilities* will be chosen by the created free will.

If God is reduced to the condition of verifying this conditional future for Himself, and if He is not free to foresee the contrary of this conditional future, He is *passive* in this prevision. Moreover, for this prevision to be not merely conjectural but infallible, it must be determined by the examination of the circumstances in which Peter would be (and will be) placed. And then how are we to avoid *determinism of the circumstances* for the created free will?

Father d'Alès, in his preceding article (p. 30), already conceded that "the theory of the *scientia media* has often been proposed in such a way as to cause his adversaries to triumph," making this determinism of circumstances inevitable. On this point we have read Father d'Alès' last article attentively, and we fail to see how he can conceive the *scientia media* otherwise so as to avoid this difficulty. He says (p. 477): "The Author of nature and grace knows the potentialities with which He has endowed the very being of each creature; knowing them, He knows the means by which He can bring them into act." But the whole question consists in this: How is it that of contra-

[25] D'Alès, p. 432. The opposition between the two teachings is manifest when we recall what St. Thomas says in Ia, q. 23, a. 5, c and ad 3um. For the same reason we cannot admit that St. Thomas took the scientia media as his viewpoint when writing his reply to objection 13 of the *De potentia,* q. 3, a. 7, a few words of which are quoted by Father d'Alès on page 468. The context shows that St. Thomas excludes only a divine motion that would necessitate the will.

dictory possible choices, God knows before any divine decree, the one that the creature will choose in a certain combination of circumstances? Foreseeing the whole difficulty, Father d'Alès adds (p. 487): "To be sure, it is a rather bold conception to associate the casual determinations of the creature with the permanence of intelligible essences."

We confess truly on our part that there are obscurities in the Thomist doctrine; but it is of importance for us to distinguish between the obscurities which are the result of a want of method and which contain a contradiction, and those, on the contrary, which result from the transcendence of the divine action, too luminous for our feeble eyes. We persist in saying that, to judge of the two systems, we must compare them from the *standpoint of method,* guided by the light of evident general rules that are accepted by both sides. We must see which of the two, in order to solve an obscure question without a begging of the question, starts from the known to go to the unknown, from absolutely certain and universal first principles (such as the principles of causality and the universal causality of the first agent). Father d'Alès (p. 502) replies: "More than one phase of the divine causality is to be seen here, and more than one divine attribute is the subject of inquiry. I think that both schools are equally desirous to proceed from the known to the unknown." It is a question of the divine causality in all its universality, for nothing must restrict it. To say that the free will of man cannot be infallibly moved by God to determine itself to act in one particular way rather than in a certain other, is not, to our mind, proceeding from the known to the unknown, and is a *begging of the question.* This definition of free will cannot be proved, as we have shown, either by experience or by reason.[26]

We must indeed admit with the greatest theologians that the two doctrines which confront each other are irreconcilable. That God *firmly* and *suavely* moves our free wills, that His efficacious grace infallibly causes us freely to will the good, is for St. Thomas a sublime mystery, for Molina a manifest absurdity.

We have striven to keep the debate within the domain of ideas; we have no wish to swerve from this course. We shall only quote a few lines from letters written to us on this controversial subject by two theologians who are not Dominicans.

[26] See *supra,* in this appendix, ch. iii, note 39 (p. 503).

"Father d'Alès strives not to understand that the concept of the *scientia media* is untenable. He confirms me in my opinion that philosophical analysis is a dissolvent of every Molinist explanation; the latter seeks fatally to set it aside, and to substitute for it psychological descriptions. That is what happens in Father d'Alès' case. He gives two pages of descriptions; then he tries to confuse you with texts. Such discussions, far from being an incentive to study the question, cool one's ardor. We must come back to the elementary things, and repeat the rudiments a hundred times."

"Thus he still finds a way to read the texts of St. Thomas on the peculiar nature of the free faculty as proofs of Molinism." [27]

"The arguments of the Thomists are irrefutable, and we must truly admit that they represent the genuine teaching of St. Thomas. We shall be no less firm in attacking the theses of Molina, in confronting ourselves with the peculiar image of God who has need of the spectacles of the *scientia media* to discover future contingent things and of much diplomacy to adjust His government to them."

There is always, we must confess, something painful about these discussions which, in spite of our efforts, are generally of too human a nature to grasp, as one should, in the calm of contemplation, the divine realities that are in question. Each one prejudices his cause in having the fixed purpose of defending it as his own doctrine, or that of *his* school. It is a question here, however, of misunderstanding *as little as possible* the very doctrine of God.

Among those who have taken this higher point of view and who have wonderfully succeeded in expressing this truth, we must quote Bossuet.

ARTICLE III

THE DIVINE PREDETERMINING DECREES ACCORDING TO BOSSUET

We cite a few extracts from the authoritative pages that he writes on this subject, in his *Traité du libre arbitre,* ch. viii.

"To reconcile the decree and the omnipotent action of God with

[27] We have already pointed this out. Father d'Alès (p. 459, note) quotes, in favor of Molinism, a text of St. Thomas (*De veritate,* q. 22, a. 4) which has nothing to do with efficacious grace, but in which St. Thomas, comparing the will with the sensitive appetite, says: "This very inclination of the will is not determined for it by another, but by itself."

our free will, we have no need to give it a *concurrence which is ready for all things indifferently and which becomes what we please;* still less do we have to *make it wait for what our will is inclined to do,* for it to formulate afterwards with no risk its decrees concerning our resolutions. For without this poor circumspection which gives us a confused notion of the First Cause, it suffices for us to bear in mind that the *divine will, whose infinite power reaches everything,* not only the essence, but all the modes of being, *is of itself accountable for the complete effect,* in which it puts everything that we conceive in it, ordaining that it will be accompanied by all the properties that are befitting it.

"Besides, the basic principle of this whole doctrine is so certain that every school agrees on it." Somewhat previous to this passage we read: "In the creature, howsoever little of being it may possess, there is nothing which is not entirely owing to God. . . . And we must not bring forward the objection that the characteristic of the exercise of free will is for it to come from this very free will; that would be true if human liberty were a first and independent liberty and not a liberty coming to it from somewhere else. . . . God, as first cause, being the cause of all being, as the first agent He must be the cause of all action, so He *causes in us the act itself,* just as He gives us the power to act. And the action of the creature does not cease to be an act, even if it be from God; on the contrary, it is all the more an action as God gives it being. . . . Thus, far from anyone being able to say that the influence of God's action upon ours takes away its liberty, on the contrary, we must conclude that our action is free a priori, because God causes it to be free. But to cause our action in us, if one were to attribute this to any other than our Author, one might think that He would be crippling our liberty and, so to speak, by tampering with so delicate a spring which He would not have made, that He would be breaking it; *but it is not in God's plan to deprive His work of anything by His action, since He is the cause, on the contrary, of everything that it is, even to the least detail;* and He is consequently the cause not only of our choice, but also that we are even free in our choice. . . . To cause the freedom of our action is *to cause that we act freely; and to do so is to will that it be so;* for, with God, to do is to will. Thus, to understand that God is the *cause* of free will in us, we are to understand only that He *wills* us to

be free. But He does not will merely that we have the power to be free, He wills us to be *free in the exercise of this power;* and He does not will merely *in a general way* that we make use of our liberty, but *He wills that we make use of it in this or that act. For He, whose knowledge and will always extents to the least detail of things,* is not content to will that beings be in a general way; but He descends to what is called this or that, that is to say, to *what is more particular,* and *all that is comprised in His decrees.* Thus, God wills, from eternity, all the acts that will be performed by the free will of human beings, all the goodness and reality there is in them. What is more absurd than to say, that it is not because God wills, that a thing exists? Must we not say on the contrary that a thing exists because God wills it? And just as it happens that we are free in virtue of the decree that wills us to be free, *so it happens that we act freely in this or that act,* in virtue *even of the decree which includes all this in detail. . . .*

"We see from this doctrine, how all things depend on God. *It is because He ordains in the first place, and then all things come about;* free creatures are no exception to this law. That they are free, is not in them an exception to the law of *common dependence,* but it is a different mode of being compared with God. . . .

"Such is the view of those who are called Thomists. This is what the ablest of them mean by the terms *premotion* and *physical predetermination,* which seem so crude to some, but which, when understood, convey such good sense. For, lastly, these theologians preserve intact in human actions *the entire notion of liberty* that we gave in the beginning. But they wish that the *use of free will,* thus defined, *should have God as its first cause,* and that He should bring it about not *only by the attractions* that precede it, *but also in what belongs to it mostly intimately;* and this appears to them to be all the more necessary in that there are many free acts in the performance of which we experience no pleasure nor any sweetness, nor, in fine, is there any other reason that urges us to perform them except our own will. *It would place these acts outside the pale of Providence and even of the divine foreknowledge,* according to the principles that we have established, *if one did not admit that God reaches,* so to speak, *deep down to the whole action of our wills,* giving immediately and intimately to each all that it has of being."

Moreover, the same Bossuet has shown, against Richard Simon, how

this doctrine of intrinsically efficacious grace is in conformity with the writings of the Fathers,[28] and the prayers of the Church. In his *Elévations* (18th week, 15th elevation) he solves "the contradictions concerning the mystery of grace," by saying: "God wills that you should say: *Heal me,* for at every moment I am dying, and I can do nothing without Thee. God wills that you should ask His help in all the good actions you must do; when you have done them, God wills that you should thank Him for having done them. He does not will thereby that you should remain inactive, making no effort; but He wills that in the efforts you make as if you had to do everything alone, you should take no pride in yourself, as if you were doing nothing."

In the *Méditations sur l'Evangile* (Part II, seventy-second day), he gives us, finally, the best interpretation of the profound thought of St. Thomas on predestination: "Proud man fears to render his salvation too uncertain, if it does not rest solely with him; but he deceives himself. Can I be sure of myself? My God, I perceive that my will plays me tricks at every turn. If Thou didst will to make me sole master of my fate, I would refuse a power so dangerous to my weakness. Let not then anyone say to me that this doctrine of grace and preference causes good souls to despair. What? They think to give me greater reassurance by leaving me to my own resources, and delivering me over to my instability. No, my God, I do not consent to this. *The only assurance I can have is in abandoning myself to Thee.* I find this all the more to be so, because those to whom Thou dost give this confidence of abandoning themselves completely to Thee, have in this sweet impulse the best proof possible on this earth of Thy goodness. Increase, then, this desire in me; by this means cause this blessed hope to come into my heart, so that in the end I may find myself numbered among the elect."

[28] *Défense de la tradition et des saints pères,* Bk. X entire. But, of course, to find out the teaching of the Fathers on this point, we must see what they say about the words of Scripture in their relation to the efficacy of grace, to our need of divine assistance, and not so much how they give practical exhortations to the faithful to co-operate by their efforts, labors, and daily struggles, with the action of grace in us. A material study of the Patristic texts certainly does not suffice to solve such a problem.

Concerning the interpretation of St. Augustine's doctrine given by Father Portalié, S.J. (*Dict. théol. cath.,* art. *"Augustin"*), see Father Jacquin's articles in the *Revue d'histoire ecclesiastique,* April 1906, and the *Revue des sciences phil. et theol.,* 1907, p. 382.

St. Francis de Sales (*On the Love of God,* Bk. II, ch. xii) says: "Grace acts vigorously, but so sweetly that our will is not left helpless under so powerful an action. . . . When our will follows the attraction and consents to the divine motion, it also does so freely, just as it freely resists when it resists, although *the consent to grace depends much more on grace than on the will,* and resistance to grace depends on the will alone; so gentle is the divine touch in the treatment of our heart. . . . *If thou didst know the gift of God"* (John 4: 10).

St. John of the Cross, in one of his well-known prayers,[29] also says: "O Lord, my God, if Thou art waiting for my good deeds to grant me what I ask, give them to me, O Lord, accomplish them in me, and add to them the difficulties which Thou desirest to accept from me."

ARTICLE IV

THE DIVINE MOTION ACCORDING TO THE CATECHISM OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT AND LEO XIII'S ENCYCLICAL LETTER ON LIBERTY

The Catechism of the Council of Trent (Part I, art. 1, "Providence"; English translation by McHugh and Callan, p. 29) reads thus: "We are not, however, to understand that God is in such wise the Creator and Maker of all things that His works, when once created and finished, could thereafter continue to exist unsupported by His omnipotence. . . . Unless preserved continually by His Providence and by the same power that produced them, they would instantly return into their nothingness. Not only does God protect and govern all things by His Providence, but *He also by an internal power impels to motion and action whatever moves and acts, and this in such a manner that, although He excludes not, He yet precedes the agency of secondary causes.*[30] *For His invisible influence extends to all things,* and, as the wise man says, *reaches from end to end mightily, and ordereth all things sweetly* (Wis. 8: 1). This is the reason why the Apostle, announcing to the Athenians the God whom not knowing,

[29] *Œuvres,* translated into French by the Carmelites of Paris, I, 475.

[30] *"Non solum autem Deus universa quae sunt, providentia sua tuetur atque administrat, verum etiam quae moventur et agunt aliquid, intima virtute, ad motum atque actionem ita impellit, ut quamvis secundarum causarum efficientiam non impediat, praeveniat tamen, cum ejus occultissima vis ad singula pertineat."*

they adored, said: *He is not far from every one of us: for in Him we live, and move, and are.*"

The same catechism (Part. II; *op. cit.*, p. 302) says of grace: "For Christ our Lord continually infuses His grace into the devout soul united to Him by charity as the head to the members, or as the vine through the branches. *This grace always precedes, accompanies and follows our good works,* and without it we can have no merit, nor can we at all satisfy God." These are, moreover, the very words of the Council of Trent which in the sixth session (ch. xvi) says: "For, whereas Jesus Christ Himself continually infuses His virtue into the said justified—*as the head into the members* and *the vine into the branches—and this virtue always precedes, and accompanies, and follows* their good works, which without it could not in any wise be pleasing and meritorious before God."

As for the canon of the same Council concerning the co-operation of the free will, we have shown (*supra*, p. 359) how it agrees with the teaching of St. Thomas and is directed against the Protestant doctrine.

Finally, with respect to resistance of temptations from the devil, the same Catechism (Part IV; *op. cit.*, p. 573) again says: "It will, then, be found most efficacious, remembering our weakness, that we distrust our own strength; and that, placing all our hopes of safety in the divine goodness and relying on the divine protection we encounter the greatest dangers with undaunted courage, calling to mind particularly the many persons, animated with such hope and resolution, who were delivered by God from the very jaws of Satan. . . . Watch ye and pray, it is said, that ye enter not into temptation" (Matt. 26: 41).

Some theologians criticized these passages of the Council of Trent and many others. They objected to them, saying that they contained either a direct or indirect reference to a doctrine not commonly accepted, that of intrinsically efficacious grace.

The Dominican Anthony Reginald at that time wrote his work *De Catechismi romani auctoritate* to show that what the Council teaches in its Catechism, especially on the efficacy of grace, was perfectly in agreement with Tradition and the decrees of this same Council (see ch. xii of this work). Rising above the disputes of the schools, he recalled the teaching of St. Augustine as found in his *De praedestinatione sanctorum,* ch. viii, which is as follows: "Far

removed from the carnal senses is this school in which God is heard and teaches. We see many coming to the Son, because we see many believing in Christ; *but we do not see where and how they heard and learnt this of the Father. That grace is most occult.*" In the same passage St. Augustine adds: "Secretely it is bestowed by the divine liberality upon human hearts, and it is spurned by none except the hard of heart; for this very purpose it is bestowed that the hardness of heart may first be taken away. . . . When the voice of the Father is heard interiorly and teaching us to come to the Son, He takes away the stony heart and gives a heart of flesh."

We shall conclude by quoting an extract from Leo XIII's Encyclical *On Human Liberty,* in which he sets forth his views on the reconciliation of grace and free will, using the same terminology as St. Thomas, without in the least alluding to the *scientia media,* devised by Molina to solve this problem.

"The first and most excellent of these aids is *the power of His divine grace,* whereby the mind can be enlightened and the will wholesomely invigorated and moved to the constant pursuit of moral good, *so that the use of our inborn liberty becomes at once less difficult and less dangerous.* Not that the divine assistance hinders in any way the free movement of our will; just the contrary, *for grace works inwardly in man and in harmony with his natural inclinations,* since it flows from the very Creator of his mind and will, by whom all things are moved in conformity with their nature. As the Angelic Doctor points out, it is because divine grace comes from the Author of nature, that it is so admirably adapted to be the safeguard of all natures, and to maintain the character, efficiency, and operations of each." [31]

Finally, is it not the doctrine of St. Thomas concerning the efficacy of the divine motion that Leo XIII makes his own when, in the Encyclical *Providentissimus,* he defines the inspiration of the Scripture. He says: "It is a supernatural power, by which God *moved* and *impelled* those to write whom He chose as His instruments, and He was so present to them that the things which He ordered, and those only, they first *rightly understood,* then *willed faithfully* to write

[31] Encyclical *Libertas,* 1888. English translation by Rev. J. Wynn, S.J., in *Great Encyclical Letters* of Leo XIII, p. 140; also *Acta Leonis XIII,* Vol. VIII, anno 1888, pp. 219 ff.

down, and finally *expressed* in apt words and with infallible truth. Otherwise it could not be said that He was the Author of the entire Scripture." [32] This divine motion thus described is intrinsically efficacious of itself without, however, destroying the liberty of the sacred writer. Instead of doing any violence to it, this divine motion infallibly directs it and preserves it from all error. And if it is so in the case of this special gift, why not admit with St. Thomas, for the ordinary course of the Christian life, that the divine motion which effectively inclines us to good, is as *mighty* as it is *agreeable*. These two qualities cannot exist in an eminent way except by being united; to detract from the first is to misunderstand the second and attack the *intimacy* of the divine action in us. If, as is true, a mother whom we intensely love has a great influence on our will to incline it from evil to good, what must we think of the infinitely more profound influence of God in us: *"If thou didst know the gift of God."*

One would like to be able to put oneself in a thoroughly supernatural atmosphere so as to meditate, far from the noise of disputes, upon the profound meaning of the divine words. The most sublime theological teachings truly have no effect upon us unless the Master interiorly operates in us, enlightening and instructing us. He alone can make us understand in all their depth of meaning the words He has inspired: *"Without me you can do nothing* (John 15: 5). *Not that we are sufficient to think anything of ourselves, as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God* (II Cor. 3: 5). *It is God who worketh in you, both to will and accomplish, according to His good will* (Phil. 2: 13). *For who distinguisheth thee? Or what hast thou that thou hast not received?"* (I Cor. 4: 7.)"

[32] *Op. cit.*, p. 297; *Acta Leonis XIII*, Vol. XIII, anno 1893, pp. 357 f. Denzinger, nn. 1950 ff.: *"Nam supernaturali ipse virtute ita eos (quos tamquam instrumenta assumpsit) ad scribendum excitavit et movit, ita scribentibus adstitit, ut ea omnia eaque sola quae ipse juberet, et recte mente conciperent et fideliter conscribere vellent, et apte infallibili veritate exprimerent: secus non ipse esset auctor sacrae Scripturae universae."*

EPILOGUE

After the publication of the article on Predeterminism (appendix to the article on Providence) in the *Dictionnaire Apologétique de la foi catholique,* the controversy on grace contained in the preceding pages was resumed from 1925 to 1927 in the *Revue thomiste* and the *Revue de philosophie;* we here give only the conclusion.

God Determining or Determined; no Other Alternative

It is with this dilemma of pure mataphysics that we will conclude our articles on this subject. Since for twelve years no one has come forward with the least semblance of an answer to this argument which, in our opinion, is absolutely insoluble, we will not answer our opponent further. Whoever has grasped the meaning and import of the preceding pages, will perceive that this *dilemma* (God determining or determined), as well as the principle that *whatever is in motion is* (*efficaciously*) *set in motion by another,* and the affirmation that the *divine decrees and divine grace are intrinsically efficacious,* pervade the whole doctrine of St. Thomas concerning God and His relations to us. To deny the alternative just stated in the title of this article would be to question the metaphysical validity of the five Thomistic proofs for the existence of God.

We have shown [1] that St. Thomas admits, with regard to our free salutary acts, a *non-necessitating predetermination* which is included in the *eternal decrees* of God in relation to these acts. This follows as a necessary consequence from the principle thus formulated by him (Ia, q. 19, a. 4): *"Determined effects* proceed from His own infinite perfection *according to the determination of His will and intellect."* That is the eternal predetermining decree. A little farther on the holy Doctor states the following objection (Ia, q. 19, a. 8, objection 2): "But the will of God cannot be hindered. Therefore the will of

[1] *Revue de philosophie,* July–August 1926, pp. 379–398, 423–433, 659–670.

God imposes necessity on the things willed." It is this objection that the Molinists are continually bringing up, even in our days,[2] against the divine predetermining decrees. St. Thomas replies: "FROM THE VERY FACT THAT NOTHING RESISTS *the divine will, it follows that not only those things happen that God wills to happen, but that they happen necessarily or contingently according to His will.*" The divine predetermining decree, far from destroying the liberty of our choice by its infallible efficacy, *is the cause of it in us,* in virtue of this transcendent efficacy which appertains solely to the decree and which extends even to the free mode of our choice.

Likewise in Ia, q. 83, a. 1 ad 3, he says: "And just as by moving natural causes He does not prevent their acts being natural, so by moving voluntary causes He does not deprive their actions of being voluntary: *but rather is He the cause of this very thing in them.*" Let us survey St. Thomas' terminology on this subject, and afterwards we will come back to the question of principles.

A QUESTION OF WORDS

In the *Contra Gentes* (Bk. III, ch. xcii) we read: "The operation of an angel merely *disposes a man to choose,* whereas the operation of God gives *completion* to his choice. . . . Man does not always choose what his guardian angel intends . . . ; whereas *he always chooses in accord with God's operation in his will.* . . . Hence the guardianship of the angels is sometimes frustrated . . . , whereas divine providence never fails." Again in Bk. I, ch. lxviii, he says: "Accordingly, by knowing His essence God knows all things to which His causality extends. Now this extends to the works of the intellect and will. . . . Therefore God knows both the thoughts and the affections of the mind." Likewise in Bk. III, ch. xci, we read: "All movements of will and *choice* must be traced to the divine will, and not to any other cause, because *God alone is the cause of our willing and choosing.*"[3] The end of ch. xc, Bk. III, reads: "What Damascene . . . says in the Second Book of his *De orthod. fide,* ch. xxx, that 'God knows in advance but does *not predetermine,* the things

[2] *Ibid.*, March–April 1927, pp. 203–224.

[3] It is a question of our *choices,* considered as *choices* and not merely as *actions,* for it is a question of their *free determination* that God knows in so far as He is the cause of it, as has been said in the preceding text.

that are in our power,' is to be understood as meaning that the things which are in our power ARE NOT SUBJECT TO THE DIVINE PREDETERMINATION IN SUCH A WAY AS TO BE NECESSITATED THEREBY." This is truly non-necessitating determination, as Silvester of Ferrara pointed out, long before Bannez.[4]

Father Synave, O.P., has proved this point very well in two articles written a few years ago, from which we take the liberty of quoting the following passages. "What is beyond doubt," he says,[5] "is what St. Thomas really thought, for he wrote: 'Those things which are in our power *are not subject to the predetermination of divine providence, as if they were necessitated by it.*' St. Thomas admits therefore a *non-necessitating divine predetermination:* the will and choice of man are subject to the predetermination of divine providence, without this predetermination imposing a necessity on them. It is not fair to write that, 'according to the constant practice of St. Thomas, the idea of necessity is inherent in the verb *predetermine.*'

"It is inexact to equate the two terms and say that to predetermine not from necessity = not to predetermine.

"May we at least assert that *to predetermine from necessity in one way only* is but a clearer and more emphatic expression which means the same as *to predetermine in one way only?* No more so. A second text, just as formal as the preceding, will prove that this equation is as false as the preceding, being merely a variant of it by the addition, in the two compared terms, of the expression 'in one way only.'

"To St. John Damascene who affirms that 'those things which are in our power, are not subject to Providence, but to our free-will,' St. Thomas replies (*De Veritate*, q. 5, a. 5 ad 1um): 'The words of Damascene are not to be understood in this wise, that all things

[4] *Sylvester of Ferrara* in the third book of the *Contra Gentes*, the end of chapter xc, says: "Gregory of Nyssa in his book *De homine*, and Damascene, in his second book, seem to say that *those things which are in our power are not subject to divine providence.*"

But he replies: "They mean simply that such things as are in our power are not necessitated by divine predetermination." This doctrine was affirmed many times by *Ferrariensis*, long before Bannez. A book has recently been published on this subject. Let us point out that St. John Damascene is concerned here most of all, not with salutary acts—for he says farther on that all good comes from God—but with *sin* as such, to which God does not predetermine us, but which He permits.

[5] *Revue thomiste*, January–February 1927: "Non-necessitating and necessitating predetermination," p. 74.

which are in our power, *i. e.,* in our choice, are to be excluded from divine providence; BUT THEY ARE TO BE UNDERSTOOD AS MEANING THAT THOSE THINGS ARE NOT DETERMINED BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE IN ONE PARTICULAR WAY, AS THOSE THINGS ARE WHICH DO NOT HAVE FREE WILL.'

"Human acts, which depend upon our choice, are therefore truly *determined in one way.* If these acts were not *determined in one way,* St. Thomas would have expressed himself in this manner: Things are not so determined only by divine providence, as those are which do not have freedom of will. But someone may remark that the phrase contains an *'ita,'* to which the negation at the beginning of the sentence applies: *Non sunt per divinam providentiam* ITA *determinata ad unum, sicut ea quae libertatem arbitrii non habent:* things are *not so determined in one way* by divine providence, *as* those are which do not have freedom of will.

"The determination in one way only of free acts does not take place in the same manner as the determination in one way only of acts which are not free. Now, we know what is the nature of the determination *in one way* of acts which do not depend upon free will; everyone agrees in saying that this is a necessitating determination. There are therefore grounds for admitting a twofold determination *in one way:* a non-necessitating and a necessitating determination; the first is that of free acts, the second of acts that are not free."

Father Synave, moreover, in his second reply to Father d'Alès, confirms this critical comment in a manner that is quite apodictic.[6]

[6] Cf. *Revue thomiste,* May–June 1927, pp. 231–249: "St. Thomas and non-necessitating predetermination," p. 241: "I take the liberty of pointing out to Father d'Alès that it is he who explains away (the text in the *Contra Gentes,* Bk. III, ch. xc) and very much so the word *'determinationi'* by attaching an a priori necessitating element to the idea of determination, which is an integral part of it, as St. John Damascene did.

"Now that, to my mind, is an error which ends in making St. Thomas speak to no purpose. If, indeed, *the word 'determination' implies necessity, why does not St. Thomas accept the formula of St. John Damascene? . . .*

"That it may not end in nonsense, the negative sentence of St. Thomas: 'What is in our power is not subject to the predetermination of divine providence as if necessitated by it,' amounts to this: Those things that are in our power are subject to the predetermination of divine providence without this predetermination imposing a necessity on them. There is no need of a powerful gloss or even of any gloss, to arrive at this which is the obvious meaning. I know of course that this literal translation is embarrassing for the system of Father d'Alès. But I cannot help it. Words are words. . . .

We must take in the same sense the famous text of the Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 4: *"Since, therefore, the will is an active principle, not determinate to one thing, but having an indifferent relation to many things, God so moves it, that He does* NOT OF NECESSITY *determine it to one thing, but its movement remains contigent and not necessary, except in those things to which it is moved naturally."*.

Non ex necessitate must be translated by *not of necessity,* as is the case throughout question 10. In article 2, *sed contra,* we read: *"Therefore it is not moved,* (the will), *of necessity,* to either of the opposites," likewise, in *corp.: "Not of necessity* does the will tend to it (particular good)." Also in the *ad 1um,* and the *ad 3um:* "But other (means) without which the end can be gained, *are not of necessity* willed by one who wills the end"; *not of necessity* means *freely.*

Likewise in article 3 *sed contra,* we have: "Therefore man's will is *not of necessity* moved by the lower appetite." Also, *in corp.: "Not of necessity* does the will tend to that whereto the passion inclines it . . . , *not of necessity* does it follow the passion."

In answer to this they say that the verb *"to determine"* is not affected by the words *"not of necessity"* in the same way as the verb *"to move,"* and that the phrase "it does not of necessity determine" is clearly "a redundant phrase, exclusive of all determination." [7] What would be the result of such principles of exegesis? The sober and formal language of St. Thomas is clearly "redundant"! It is the same as saying that, in the phrase *"it does not of necessity determine,"* the words *"of necessity"* are absolutely useless, when we have in them the formal answer. The immediate context of the proposition demands that we translate *"non ex necessitate"* by *"not of necessity,"* even in the case of the verb *"to determine."* We see this to be so, not only from other parallel texts of St. Thomas which we have just quoted, but especially, and we must stress this point, from the *question as stated* as title of this article, which was made so clear at the start by two objections which do not differ from those always brought forward by the Molinists:

"Every agent that cannot be resisted moves OF NECESSITY; but God

"It seems to me to belong to the most elementary criticism, to accept this clearly established phrase (*determination of divine providence*) and if it goes counter to a system or a point of view on determination, to reform the one or abandon the other."

[7] *Revue de philosophie,* March–April 1927, p. 206.

cannot be resisted, because His power is infinite" (Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 4, obj. 1a).

"Something IMPOSSIBLE follows from the supposition that the will does not will that to which God moves it: because in that case God's operation would be ineffectual" (*ibid.*, obj. 3a). To this St. Thomas replies without the least reference to the divine foreknowledge of our consent by means of a knowledge which would remind us in any way of the *scientia media,* but he insists, on the contrary, upon the *transcendent efficacy* of the divine causality:

"In reply to the first objection it must be said that the *divine will extends* not only to the doing of something by the thing which He moves (choice as action), but also to *its being done in a way* which is fitting to the nature of that thing" (this being choice with *its free mode* of choice, caused by God Himself in us and with us, when He *moves* us *infallibly* to perform *this* salutary *act, rather* than that other, and this in virtue of the *intrinsic efficacy of His* motion which man does not in fact resist). "And therefore it would be more repugnant to the divine motion, for the will to be moved *of necessity,* which is not fitting to its nature, than for it to be moved *freely,* which is becoming to its *nature."*

Likewise in his answer to the third objection, St. Thomas again affirms the *intrinsic efficacy* of the divine motion spoken about in the objection, but he replies that under the influence of this motion which man does not in fact resist, he retains *the power* to resist; he could resist if he wished; but under the influence of this motion he never wishes to resist: "In reply to the third objection it must be said that, if God moves the will to anything it is IMCOMPOSSIBLE with this supposition that the will be not moved thereto (otherwise God's operation would be *ineffectual,* as stated in the objection). *But it is not impossible simply.* Consequently it does not follow that the will is moved by God necessarily." To grasp fully the exact meaning of the replies made by St. Thomas, they must not be separated from the objections that he intends to solve.

There is no possible doubt that here it is truly a question of non-necessitating predetermination. To understand these texts in any other way would be to strip them of their metaphysical texture, as the Nominalists did who saw in first principles only solemn futilities. The terms employed by St. Thomas would have even no more meaning.

Moreover, why should he always have recourse, *not to the divine foreknowledge of our consent,* as Molina does, but to the TRANSCENDENT EFFICACY of the divine causality which extends even to our choices and to the free mode of these? If by the words *choice* and free *mode,* he did not mean the determination of our free will, what could he then mean by them?

"Since therefore God Himself is the cause of our choice and of our will, our choices and wills are subject to divine providence. . . . Those things which are in our power are not subject to divine providence AS IF NECESSITATED BY IT" (*Contra Gentes,* Bk. III, ch. xc, beginning and end).

In the preceding articles we quoted other texts as explicit as those we have just referred to.[8]

The passage in *De veritate,* q. 22, a. 6, which is quoted against us,[9] speaks of the determination *to one thing "by natural inclination,"* "by way of nature," which is necessitating, most certain, and therefore quite different from that with which we are concerned.[10]

[8] See Ia, q. 19, a. 8: *"Since then the divine will is perfectly* EFFICACIOUS, it follows not only that *things are done,* which God wills to be done, but also that they ARE DONE IN THE WAY *that He wills.* Now God wills some things to be done necessarily, some *contingently."* Likewise ad 2um and in the *Contra Gentes,* Bk. I, ch. lxxxv; Bk. II, chs. xxix and xxx; *De veritate,* q. 23, a. 5; *De malo,* q. 6, a. 1 ad 3; q. 16, a. 7 ad 15; *Quodl.* XI, q. 3; XII, q. 3 ad 1. See I *Periherm.,* lect. 14; also Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 4, c and ad 1, ad 3; q. 112, a. 3. The text of the *De veritate,* q. 23, a. 5, is particularly characteristic: "But the divine will is a *most powerful agent.* Hence its effect must be in every respect like it, so that not only that is done *which* God wills . . . but that it is done *in the way* that God wills it to be done, either necessarily or contingently."

[9] *Revue de philosophie,* March–April 1927, pp. 204 f.

[10] Cf. *De veritate,* q. 22, a. 6: "I answer by saying that for this reason anything is said to be *necessary, in that it is invariably determined to one thing.* Hence, since the will is indifferently related (as a faculty) to many things, it is not necessitated with regard to all things but only to those to which it is *determined by natural inclination."*

If one would have it that the first line of this text enunciates an absolutely universal principle, then it would be necessary, as St. Thomas so often does, to distinguish between the *absolute necessity* of the determination *by way of nature* and the *conditional necessity* or that consequent upon a free determination. Cf. Ia, q. 22, a. 2 ad 4: "Man has not a prefixed *operating force determined to only the one effect,* as in the case of natural things. . . . But since the *very act of free will is traced to God as to a cause,* it necessarily follows that everything happening from the exercise of free will must be subject to divine providence."

Finally, there is not, whatever one may say,[11] a tremendous paralogism, or even any paralogism, in this reasoning, the two premises of which are provided by St. Thomas, and which are as follows: Almighty God can effect, operating *within* our will, to which He is more intimately present than it is to itself, what the will itself does.[12] Now our will is determined *to one thing,* without being necessitated. Therefore Almighty God can determine it without necessitating it. In other words, He can, by His omnipotence, which extends even to the *free mode* of our choice—which mode is also *being* and is included in the adequate object of omnipotence—move it *infallibly to determine itself to this free act rather* than to that other. Certainly there are not two created determinations, one caused by God alone, which, like a little winch, would necessitate ours; there is *only one free determination* which is infallibly caused by God as First Cause and by us as secondary cause premoved to it by God: *"There is no distinction between what comes from free will, and what is of predestination: as there is no distinction between what comes from a secondary cause and from a first cause"* (Ia, q. 23, a. 5). If it were otherwise, there would no longer be any mystery in the so mysterious reconciliation, as St. Augustine says, of the divine causality with our liberty. The least intelligent of human beings can understand, indeed, that *liberty remains,* if the free determination is not *infallibly* caused by God. There is nothing easier to understand; but then we must reject by this simplism the text of St. Thomas just quoted: "There is no distinction between what comes from free will and what is of predestination: as there is no distinction between what comes from a secondary cause and from a first cause."

The doctrine of St. Thomas is the same as that expressed by Bossuet in these ever memorable terms: "Thus God eternally wills all

Also in a. 4 ad 2: "The order of divine providence is unchangeable and certain, so far as all things foreseen happen as they have been foreseen, whether from necessity or from contingency." *Item, De malo,* q. 6, a. 1 ad 3.

[11] *Revue de philosophie, ibid.,* p. 209.

[12] See St. Thomas, *De veritate,* q. 22, a. 8: "God can change the will from the fact that He Himself operates in the will as He does in nature. . . . Hence, as the will can change its act for another, much more so can God" (*who operates more vigorously,* as St. Thomas has just said). St. Augustine said the same. Cf. *De correptione et gratia,* ch. xiv: "Concerning the wills of men, God does what He wills and when He wills. *The wills of men are more in God's power than in their own.*"

the future exercise of man's liberty in all its goodness and reality. What, then, is more absurd than to say that, because God wills it, therefore there is no such free exercise of the will? Must we not rather say that there is such a thing precisely because God wills it so; and that, as it happens that we are free by virtue of the decree which wills that we be free, so it also happens that we act freely in this or that act by virtue of the same decree which extends to every detail of the act?" [13]

The study of the terminology thus brings us back to the great Thomist theses.

A Question of Principles

As many Molinists maintain always and notwithstanding every thing, that St. Thomas never admitted, about the *non-necessitating predetermination,* that it is even a *"strange"* [14] conception of it, contrary to all its principles, and that it admits only a non-necessitating motion, we have replied as follows: [15] The divine motion which is INTRINSICALLY EFFICACIOUS *and which inclines one infallibly to this free act rather than to that other,* evidently deserves to be called a non-necessitating predetermination, in so far as it gives infallible assurance of the fulfilment of an *eternal predeterminating* and EFFICACIOUS *decree,* and this too OF ITSELF, instead of being due to the foreknowledge of our consent, as the defenders of the *scientia media* will have it, and of which St. Thomas never spoke. The decree is entirely a question of principles; let us return to it for the last time, examining it with the greatest accuracy and from an objective point of view.

St. Thomas admirably pointed out what is the relation of God's foreknowledge to the predetermining decree of His will, when in Ia, q. 14, a. 8 ("Whether the knowledge of God is the cause of things.") he said: *"Since the intelligible form* has a relation to opposite things, inasmuch as the same knowledge relates to opposites, it would not produce *a determinate effect* unless *it were determined to one thing by the appetite,* as the Philosopher says (*Metaph.,* IX, 5).

[13] Bossuet, *Traité du libre arbitre,* ch. viii.

[14] *Revue de philosophie,* March–April, p. 207. It is for the reader to judge if there is anything *"strange"* in the admirable lines of Bossuet that we have just quoted and that are expressive of this very exalted and genial concept.

[15] *Ibid.,* 1926, pp. 659–670.

. . . Hence His knowledge must be the cause of things, *in so far as His will is joined to it.*" Behold the decree of the divine will; he says somewhat the same in Ia, q. 19, a. 4, corp. 2a ratio. This doctrine in no way ignores the rôle of foreknowledge, in affirming that of the divine will.

But one of the fundamental reasons, as we have said, why every Thomist will always reject the Molinist theory, is that this theory of necessity causes one to posit *a passivity in the pure Act.* If the divine causality is not *predetermining* with regard to our *choice* (conditionally future at first and then future), the divine knowledge is fatally *determined* by it. To wish to limit the universal causality and absolute independence of God, necessarily brings one to place a passivity in Him, a passivity in the *self-subsisting Being,* in the *self-subsisting intellect.* If, in fact, the divine motion does not infallibly assure the execution of a divine intrinsically efficacious and predetermining decree, it follows, as Molina and his disciples maintain that, *of two men equally tempted and* EQUALLY HELPED *by God,* it happens that one consents to co-operate with the grace and the other does not.[16] And then the *difference,* which distinguishes the good from the bad consent and this man from that other, does not come from God, but *solely from man's free will. These are the very words of Lessius.*[17] In one case, man's free will has caused the divine grace to be efficacious *in actu secundo,* in the other it remained sterile. But then, as we said, one contradicts the texts of St. Paul (I Cor. 4: 7) who says: *"For who distinguisheth thee? Or what hast thou that thou hast not received?"* It becomes consequently quite clear for one who speaks seriously and does not wish to trifle with words, that *the foreknowledge* is *passive* when one positively asserts that this *difference* does not at all come from God; just as I am a *passive* spectator *when I see*

[16] It is in this manner that Molina speaks in many propositions of his *Concordia,* and they are summed up in the index of this work in the following manner: "Of two that are called and *equally aided by grace,* it can happen that one of them is converted and the other not. It is possible for one who has received a *less grace* to rise again, when another who has received a greater grace does not rise again, and remains obdurate."

[17] Lessius, *De gratia efficaci,* ch. xviii, n. 7: "Of two *similarly called,* that one accepts the grace offered, the other rejects it: it is truly said *that this is due to free will alone,* not that he who accepts does so by his free will alone, but because the difference is the result of free will alone, so as not to be due to the diversity of prevenient grace."

that this man, independently of me, is seated, whereas that other is standing; or again *when I see* that this one is killing someone and that other is being killed. Moreover, with regard to this *difference,* the divine will which consents to this too late, it, too, is not determining but *determined.* A new passivity has entered into the pure Act, who henceforth is no more like to God than is the false diamond like the true.

In the case of these two men as stated above, who, situated in the same external and internal circumstances, equally tempted and EQUALLY HELPED, grace in *the former rather* than in *the latter* and *not vice versa,* in Peter *rather* than in Judas, and not in Judas rather than in Peter, was EFFICACIOUS *in actu secundo,* not of itself, nor because God willed it, but because Peter willed it, and it is *only afterwards* that God, although He is Being itself, Intelligence itself, Goodness itself, saw and willed it determinately. There is a twofold passivity in pure Act. I quite understand, it is useless to recall it, that the *scientia media* has foreseen first of all this free consent of Peter as a *conditional future* (what Peter *would choose* if he were situated in such circumstances), but without this passive prevision, God, according to this theory, could not infallibly know what Peter *really will choose* when actually situated in such combination of circumstances.[18]

Henceforth we must reject the doctrine of St. Augustine who says: *"Why God draws this one and not that one, judge not, if thou wilt not err"* (in Joann., tr. 26). One could easily answer St. Augustine and say: "Of two men equally tempted and *equally helped,* God draws the one who of his own accord determines himself to co-operate with the prevenient grace, and He does not draw the other who puts an obstacle in the way." One has thus done away with the mystery, but one has put a passivity in the pure Act. One has *"confused,"* as Bossuet said, the whole idea of a First Cause.[19] The metaphysical or absolute validity of the proofs for the existence of God has thus been attacked.

It is the same with every doctrine which maintains that man, by his consent, causes the grace of God to be efficacious *in actu secundo.* According to such a view, grace said to be efficacious gives indeed, in *actu primo,* of itself, the proximate power to act, but it is not actually

[18] Let us note that this objection applies as well to the *difference* with regard to easy salutary acts and the continuance of them, as when it is a question of this difference with regard to difficult acts.

[19] *Traité du libre arbitre,* ch. viii.

followed by the consent of Peter rather than that of James, because Peter has added to it a DETERMINATION that God Himself, in spite of His omnipotence, cannot infallibly produce in us and with us. Now *this determination* IS WHAT IS OF GREATER IMPORTANCE IN THE WORK OF SALVATION, and that is what is withdrawn from the universal causality of God who is the *Author of salvation*. Moreover, if God does not predetermine our salutary choice *suavely* and *firmly*, without necessitating us, it is He Himself who is DETERMINED by us, and even NECESSITATED TO SEE something which is INDEPENDENT of Him: to see what Peter WOULD CHOOSE if situated in such circumstances and what he will actually choose to do when so situated. Imagine, if you can, this PASSIVITY, this DEPENDENCE as regards a conditional future in the *self-subsisting Intellect*.

If the *dependence*, as regards this DETERMINATION, is not in us, it is in God; and if it is neither in Him nor in us, the relation between us and Him is impossible; He has no knowledge of our free acts.

This is one of the most tiresome of objections, for fundamentally this dilemma is insoluble. And then how are we going to get out of it? Nothing simpler. They reply to us: [20] "Father Garrigou-Lagrange speaks in his first page of a grace that man would cause to be efficacious by his consent and starts to make war upon us. Undoubtedly it is this that he calls a passivity in the pure Act. Is it necessary to point out once more that this foolish notion does not in the least interpret my thought and that I am not interested in the chimera that he is combating? The monster of his creation prevents him from seeing the reality." Likewise, a little farther on,[21] concerning the Thomists, we read: "They suppose that their adversaries base the efficacy of grace not upon the knowledge and will of God, but on man's free will, and have not words enough of sarcasm for so puerile an invention."

That is one of the most valuable of concessions for us. Now we know that the doctrine according to which "man by his consent causes the grace of God to be efficacious" is a monster, a chimera, or at least a puerile invention.

But who created this monster? Did we? Surely it was Molina himself who wrote in his *Concordia* (q. 14, a. 13, disp. 40; Paris ed., 1876, p. 230): "Hence we assert: under n. 5, the HELPS of prevenient

[20] *Revue de philosophie*, March–April 1927, p. 215.
[21] *Ibid.*, p. 222.

and adjuvant grace which are granted by the ordinary law to wayfarers, that they be EFFICACIOUS or INEFFICACIOUS for conversion or justification, DEPEND UPON THE FREE CONSENT AND CO-OPERATION OF OUR WILL, and so it IS FREELY IN OUR POWER EITHER TO CAUSE THEM TO BE EFFICACIOUS by consenting and co-operating with them to the acts which dispose us for justification, or cause *them to be inefficacious,* by withholding our consent and co-operation, or even by eliciting the contrary act of dissent."

If that is a theological monster, it is not a creation of the Thomists. It is constantly to be met with in the *Concordia* of Molina, in which we read such as follows: "It is clearly defined (in the Council of Trent), that it DEPENDS UPON OUR WILL *to cause* the divine *helps to be efficacious* or *inefficacious* for our conversion and justification" (q. 23, disp. 1, membr. 6, *ed. cit.,* p. 459).

It is this doctrine, indeed, that the Thomists have unceasingly combated. They have not distorted it; they have quoted faithfully and loyally the texts in which Molina has given the least hint of it, particularly this one: "When you hear it said that it is our consent which *causes* the helps of grace *to be efficacious,* do not so understand it as if our free will gave some force or efficacy to the helps of grace . . . but it *applies to it the condition without which such help* will not have the force of *efficacy* in comparison with such effect" (*Concordia, ibid.,* p. 462). The free will, according to this teaching, causes the grace to be efficacious not *in actu primo* (first movement), but *in actu secundo* (completed act), in bringing to it the free determination which is, however, what is more important in the work of salvation.

Hence it follows, according to Molina (*Concordia, ed. cit.,* p. 51), that: "It can happen that *one prevented* and *called by a far greater grace,* of his own free will is *not converted,* and another, having received a far less grace, is converted." (*Item,* p. 565.) This is absolutely contrary to the doctrine of St. Thomas who, in Ia, q. 20, a. 2, says: "THE LOVE OF GOD CREATES AND INFUSES GOODNESS IN THINGS"; and in a. 4 he says: *"God's will is the cause of goodness in things;* AND THE REASON WHY SOME THINGS ARE BETTER THAN OTHERS, IS THAT GOD WILLS FOR THEM A GREATER GOOD. *Hence it follows that He loves more the better things."* He who wills freely to be converted is in that case *better* than the other; and this presupposes that he has been *loved more* and helped more *by God.*[22]

[22] St. Thomas says the same thing in his Commentary on Matt. 25: 15: "He

The contrary conclusion formulated by Molina is deduced directly from his definition of the *scientia media:* In the *Concordia,* (q. 14, a. 13, disp. 52, *ed. cit.,* pp. 317–318), he says: "The *scientia media,* by which from a most profound and inscrutable comprehension of each free will by an intuition of His essence He has foreseen *what, according to the native disposition of the will,* it *would do,* if situated in this or that or even an untold combination of circumstances, since however it could, if it wished, do just the opposite. . . . We must say in answer to this that it (*scientia media*) *on no account is to be called free,* both because it precedes every free act of the divine will, and also because it was NOT IN GOD'S POWER TO KNOW BY THIS KNOWLEDGE ANYTHING ELSE THAN HE ACTUALLY KNEW. (There you have, indeed, *passivity in the pure Act* as regards what Peter of his own accord *would choose* to do rather than James equally tempted, and *equally helped,* if they were situated in the same circumstances.) Furthermore, not even is it natural in this sense, as if it were to such a degree innate to God that He could not know the OPPOSITE of that which He knows by this knowledge (whereby the *scientia media* differs from the knowledge of simple intelligence). *For if the created free will were to do the opposite, as it truly can, He would have known even this by the same knowledge, but not that He actually knows it.* . . . Likewise that a *being endowed with free will,* if situated in a certain combination of events and circumstances, *is inclined one way or the other, this is not due to God's foreknowledge,* NAY RATHER THE REASON WHY GOD FOREKNOWS IT IS, BECAUSE *the being itself endowed with free will* freely must do JUST WHAT IT DOES, NOR IS THIS DUE TO THE FACT THAT GOD WILLS IT TO BE DONE, *but because the being itself* FREELY WILLS TO DO IT." We have here, indeed, a double passivity in the pure Act: (1) in the foreknowledge: "*the reason why* God foreknows it is *because* the being itself endowed with free will freely must do just what it does"; (2) in the divine will which consents too late to what would be the choice of Peter rather than James if they were both situated in the same circumstances.

Now this definition of the *scientia media* must be necessarily defended by all those who wish to preserve intact the intrinsic characteristic of this theory and who hold that God can infallibly know the

who makes a greater effort, has a greater grace, *but that he does so, he needs to be moved by a higher cause.*" (Likewise, on Ephes. 4:7, and Ia IIae, q. 112, a. 4.)

free conditional futures previous to any determining divine decree. In that, the successors of Molina have been able to modify accidentally his teaching but it still remains substantially his after the changes they have made. It is a case of saying that they have embroidered upon a canvas which is stronger than their thread; the philosophical error is always there under the arabesques: "IT WAS NOT IN GOD'S POWER TO KNOW BY THIS SCIENTIA (*media*) ANYTHING ELSE THAN HE ACTUALLY KNEW . . . ; THE REASON WHY God foreknows it is BECAUSE the thing itself endowed with free will FREELY *must* DO JUST WHAT IT DOES." God, pure Act in the order of being, pure Act in the order of intelligence and love, God, THE SELF-SUBSISTING BEING, THE SELF-SUBSISTING INTELLECT, THE SELF-SUBSISTING WILL, God, sovereign actuality, supreme determination, who is not subsequently *determinable,* is, nevertheless, passive, DETERMINED, and even NECESSITATED, in His foreknowledge, to see what WOULD and WILL be the CHOICE of Peter rather than that of James equally tempted and equally helped in the same circumstances. Contrary to what St. Thomas always taught, *God's knowledge is measured by things.*

We may seek to divert the issue by a literary style and play on words. The fact remains that God is DETERMINED in seeing this choice rather than another; He is even NECESSITATED in this: "It was not in God's power to know by this *scientia* (*media*) anything else than he actually knew." As for Peter's liberty, how is this safeguarded? If God, by examining this created will and the circumstances in which it will be situated, foresees infallibly what will be its choice, how are we to avoid admitting determinism of circumstances? If that is a theological monster, it is not of our creation.

And that is the theory the germ of which they want to find in St. Augustine and St. Thomas!

But Molina is the first to tell us that one will seek for it there in vain. How can we forget what he wrote on this subject in one of the most precious pages of the *Concordia* (q. 23, a. 4, 5, disp. 1, membr. ult., ed. cit., pp. 546, 548)? Permit us to quote this somewhat forgotten text.

"But Augustine believed that, with what he had most correctly taught from the Scripture about grace against the Pelagian heresy, is connected the question of God's eternal *predestination not being according to the merits and nature of the use of free will as foreseen by God,* but only according to His election and good pleasure (and in

this sense it is most true as was explained in Member XII); it was in this sense that he interpreted in many of his works the text of St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans (ch. ix); . . . *But St. Thomas followed Augustine's opinion, and so did many Scholastics after him.*

"In our humble opinion we declare that the whole question of reconciling the freedom of the will with the divine foreknowledge and predestination, which we have always taught throughout article 13 of question 14, and in article 6 of question 19, in question 22 and throughout this question, rests upon the following principles from which we have deduced it, and which we have given in various places. *If these principles had always been given and explained, perhaps neither the Pelagian heresy would have sprung up,* nor would the Lutherans have dared so impudently to deny the freedom of our will, objecting that divine grace is incompatible with foreknowledge and predetermination, *nor would so many of the faithful have been disturbed in their mind because of Augustine's opinion* and the controversies with the Pelagians."

The Salmanticenses [23] in quoting this text of Molina cannot refrain from writing: "What a necessary man for those times (of Pelagianism)! What powerful antidote and opportune for such great blindness (of the Lutherans)! . . . Was there any man more learned than Augustine whose lot it was to be so envied by so great a disturbance! . . . As if God finally revealed to Molina alone, whatsoever to Augustine and the holy Fathers and the most learned of theologians for countless centuries even to our own times He has not at all made known."

Fonseca, S.J., Molina's teacher, declared in his *Metaphysics* (Vol. III, Bk. VI, ch. ii, q. 6, sec. 8) that he himself had thought of this theory of the *scientia media* before his disciple, but that he had not made it known, "lest on these grounds he might perhaps be introducing an innovation which is not perfectly in agreement with the common teaching of the Fathers or with the careful consideration and accurate discussion of the Scholastics."

Fonseca must have known, indeed, that this idea of the *scientia media* was current among the Semi-Pelagians, for they affirmed that God grants the grace of Baptism to this child who is about to die

[23] *De gratia,* disp. 5, dub. 7, n. 174.

rather than to that other, because He foresaw what use it *would have made* freely of the grace if it had lived.

Now St. Augustine rejected this foreknowledge, viewed in this way, not only because of the abuse the Semi-Pelagians made of it, but also because it is essentially at fault, in so far as it posits a *passivity* in the divine intellect with regard to man's free choice.[24]

The necessity of the dilemma, "God DETERMINING or DETERMINED, *no other alternative,*" has its foundation in the first principles from which the five Thomistic proofs for the existence of God are derived. They are as follows: Every movement, whether pertaining to body or spirit, intellect or will, depends upon God the prime mover; every created causality depends upon the causality of the First Agent; every contingent determination depends upon the prime necessary Being; everything that participates in goodness depends upon the sovereign Good; every determination ordained to an end depends upon the supreme Ordainer. St. Thomas himself applies these principles to our choices so as to establish this conclusion, namely: *"God alone is the cause of our wills and choices"* (III *Contra Gentes,* ch. xci, n. 2; *item,* ch. xc). This dilemma is a basic issue of the teaching of St. Thomas concerning the divine knowledge, Ia, q. 14, a. 5, 8, 14; the divine will, Ia, q. 19, a. 4, 6, 8; God's love for us. Ia, q. 20, a. 2, 4; providence and predestination, Ia, q. 22, a. 2 ad 4; a. 4 ad 1; q. 23, a. 4 ad 1; a. 5; divine grace, Ia IIae, q. 109, a. 1; q. 112, a. 3; IIa IIae, q. 24, a. 11.

The gist of the texts is, that what is of more importance in the work of salvation cannot escape the universal causality of God who is the author of salvation. Now, what is of more importance in the work of salvation is the *salutary free determination,* the good use of

[24] See St. Augustine, *De dono perseverantiae,* ch. xvii; speaking of our good works, he says: "Or perhaps they say that neither are these predestined. Therefore they are *either* not *given by God,* or *He did not know that He will give them. But if they are given* and He foreknew that He will give them, *assuredly He predestined them.*" If God has not decreed our good works, our salutary free acts, He has not given them to us or He has not known that He will give them to us. If, on the contrary, He gives them to us and has *foreseen* that He will give them to us, it is because He has predestined us *by His decree* to bring them to completion. Likewise in the *De praedestinatione sanctorum,* ch. x, he says: "By predestination God foreknew those things which He was going to do"; it is a foreknowledge which has its foundation in the decree to grant the efficacious grace, *"the grace which is spurned by none except the hard-hearted,* because it *is primarily given* to overcome this *hardness* (of heart)." *Ibid.,* ch. viii; and *De dono persev.,* ch. ix.

grace. Therefore this salutary free determination which is found in Peter and not in that other man, is the effect of the divine causality, the divine decrees and grace, which are efficacious *of themselves* and not because of the foreseen consent of our will.

God is either *determining* or *determined,* there is *no* other alternative. His knowledge of free conditional futures is *measured* by things, or else it *measures* them by reason of the accompanying decree of the divine will. Our salutary choices, as such, in the intimacy of their free *determination,* depend upon God, or it is He, the sovereignly independent pure Act, who *depends* upon us. There is no other alternative.[25]

Molina saw quite well that there is no possible middle course between the stand taken by St. Augustine and St. Thomas, and his own, and that is why he was forced to formulate the famous proposition which expresses the very essence of the *scientia media:* "IT WAS NOT IN GOD'S POWER TO KNOW by this *scientia* (*media*) ANYTHING ELSE *than He actually knew* . . .; THE REASON WHY God foreknows it is BECAUSE the being itself endowed with free will MUST DO FREELY JUST WHAT IS DONE; nor is this due to the fact that *God wills* it to be done, but *because the being itself* freely wills to do it." [26]

We know that Molina had written a little further on [27] to this effect: *"Although I admit it to be true that St. Thomas seems to suggest the contrary of this* (Ia, q. 14, a. 8), in his reply to the first objection, when explaining the same he endeavors to wrest the statement of Origen just referred to, which is clearly the same teaching as ours, *in the opposite sense."* Was Origen a master to follow on the subject of foreknowledge and predestination? (See St. Thomas, Ia, q. 23, a. 5.)

The knowledge of God is the CAUSE *of our free determinations,* or else it is CAUSED *by them,* because Peter *would choose* if he were situated in such circumstances and *in fact will choose* when so situated. *The knowledge of God either measures things or is measured by*

[25] The exclusion of a third clause in the dilemma is based upon the principle given by St. Thomas in *De veritate* (q. 8, a. 8), that: *"it is impossible for any two things to be alike* (as *the one knowing* and *the thing known,* of which St. Thomas is speaking in this article), *except in one of two ways;* either *one is the cause of the other,* or *both are caused from the same cause* which impresses the same form on each."

[26] *Concordia,* q. 14, a. 13, disp. 52, cit., p. 318.

[27] *Ibid.,* p. 325.

them. Only anthropomorphism can admit the second term of the dilemma and therefore, from sheer necessity, we must keep to the first. There is no other solution. It has its obscurities, those of a profound mystery, but it avoids contradiction. Said a Dominican cardinal: "It is only by dint of fighting against this sublime doctrine that one can be deprived of the efficacious grace, necessary for willing to understand it properly and for actually understanding it properly." There might be some truth in this remark.

At all events, the Thomist position is so strong that even its adversaries feel themselves obliged to concede to it the following propositions, considering themselves free afterwards to stamp them with the note of relativity by reintroducing, through some adverb, a *scientia media,* shameful in itself, which unwarrantably makes its presence felt everywhere without giving its name.

These precious concessions are as follows:

"*To find out the reason for this efficacy,* we shall turn more naturally to God, *the Author of every excellent gift; and this is the immediate answer of faith,* to wit, that *grace is efficacious, because God willed it so.* . . . If you ask why such grace is efficacious, there is only one answer: God willed it, *Complacuit.*" [28]

Then why not admit that God, without necessitating, *mightily* and *suavely* determines Peter's choice, because, in fine, grace will be efficacious only if it is followed by Peter's salutary choice, and therefore, in the end, we must say that it is followed by this choice (which is at first a conditional future and then a simple future), *because* God, the Author of all good, *willed it?*

What we are fully agreed upon is this, that the doctrine according to which "man by his consent *causes* the grace of God to be *efficacious,* is truly a theological "*monster.*" [29] The word is not ours, but we fully endorse it. This discussion has therefore not been absolutely useless. It has shown once more that the dilemma, in the precise form as given here, is necessarily connected with the fundamental articles of St. Thomas concerning the divine knowledge and will in their relations to created liberty. God determines the free choice of the salutary acts of the will, or, if it is not so, then it is He Himself who is deter-

[28] *Revue de philosophie,* March 1927, p. 215.
[29] *Idem.,* March–April, p. 215, note 2.

mined [80] by them. This dilemma rests ultimately upon the distinction between potency and act, the foundation for which we shall again bring to the reader's notice. (See *infra*, p. 558 ff.)

Foundation for the Distinction between Potency and Act according to St. Thomas

In these closing pages, especially in answering the objections formulated by Louis Rougier in a recent book of his which he wrote against the Christian faith and Thomism, we should like briefly to recall how the doctrine of act and potency, when properly understood, is seen to be the soul of the whole philosophy of Aristotle and St. Thomas, and how, on the contrary, it would be the total destruction of this same doctrine to conceive of *potency* as an *imperfect act*, such as some Scholastics, and after them Leibniz, conceived it to be.

Many authors, taking more or less into account this difference of opinion, state truly, by way of a *nominal definition*, what is the nature of act and potency; they point out their mutual relations and the commonly admitted axioms in the Schools, but they do not sufficiently determine with Aristotle, *why* it is necessary to admit the reality of a potency between nothingness and determinate being, nor how potency is distinguished from *privation*, from the *mere possible*, or, on the contrary, from the *imperfect act*.

We must first give our attention to this, so that we may have a clearer conception of the validity of the applications of this doctrine either in the order of being or in that of operation. This article will be concerned with this point and the first of these applications, namely, those that refer to the order of being, and we will start from sensible beings and ascend to God.

Definition of Potency and the Necessity of a Real Distinction between It and Act

According to Aristotle, as appears from the *Physics*, Bk. I and II, and the *Metaphysics*, Bk. I, chs. v and ix, the real distinction between potency and act is absolutely necessary, so that we may reconcile

[80] As for sinful acts, we have several times explained that God *is the cause of the physical entity of these and merely permits the disorder there present;* it is in His permissive decree that He foresees this. Cf. Ia IIae, q. 79, a. 1, 2.

these two facts attested by experience, namely, the becoming and multiplicity of beings *with the principle of contradiction or of identity:* "being is being, non-being is non-being," or "being is not non-being," and "there can be no intermediate state between nothingness and being."

We see clearly what was Aristotle's teaching from the way he solves the arguments of Parmenides. *In virtue of the principle of identity* or of contradiction, Parmenides, contrary to Heraclitus, understood by this the denial of *all change* and *all multiplicity* in beings: (1) Being, he said, cannot *come* from being, *ex ente non fit ens,* for what *becomes* does not yet exist, and the being from which it should come already exists, is already determined and is not susceptible of further determination; *being does not come from what is already being; a statue does not come from what is already a statue; an ox does not come from what is already an ox, and that which is becoming as yet does not exist.* Besides, nothing can come from non-being, for non-being does not exist; it is pure nothing, and nothing can come from nothing: *ex nihilo nihil fit.* It absolutely follows from this that THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS BECOMING. (2) The limitation, diversity, and multiplicity in beings cannot evidently be explained by being itself, nor by a principle foreign to it, for apart from being there is only *non-being,* and non-being is nothingness. There is only one existing substance, and a second substance is absolutely impossible of realization; it could not be distinguished from the first, as Spinoza said in more modern times.

Plato, in order to solve these two arguments of Parmenides, distinguished between *being* and *non-being which in a certain way exists,* though not of itself determined; thus, for him, *matter* is a *non-being which* is, as it were, the receptacle for the participation of ideas. So, in this way is explained and by it, multiplicity of beings in the same species and becoming.[31]

With greater penetration and clearness of mind, Aristotle solved these arguments of Parmenides by distinguishing between act and potency.[32]

Being, he said, cannot come from *actual being, because* it would exist before becoming so, and what is becoming does not yet exist; for instance, the statue does not come from the statue, but from this

[31] See Plato, *Sophista,* 241 d, 257 a, 259 c.

[32] *Physics,* Bk. I, ch. viii; *Metaphysics,* Bk. I, ch. v; Bk. IV and Bk. IX.

matter which was first a statue in potentiality, and then the actual statue comes from what was in potentiality to be a statue; it is made from wood that was capable of becoming a statue, by receiving a new determination.

What then is *potency* or *potential being,* from which the statue comes? It is the wood in so far as it is *determinable.* But the *determinable* as such, what is it?

1) It is not *nothingness: ex nihilo, nihil fit* (nothing is made from nothing), as Parmenides said.

2) It is not *non-being,* which is solely the negation or privation of the form called statue. This negation, of itself is nothing, and *ex nihilo per se nihil fit;* moreover, this negation is equally present in the air and the water as in the wood, and they cannot however become a statue.

3) It is not the *essence of the wood*—for according to this the wood is already in act—nor is it its actual form; nothing comes from a being that is already in act, for what is becoming, previous to this was not in existence.

4) Neither is the determinable as such *the imperfect form of the statue,* that is to say, the *imperfect act,* for this imperfect act already would be the external form of the statue that is in the process of becoming; one would thus be only deferring the question; it is the very beginning of becoming, the act as imperfect as possible, that we must explain.

The "determinable" which becomes the statue, is the *real capacity* of the wood to receive the form called statue, a capacity that is found neither in the air nor in the water; it is called a *real potency* for becoming a statue, or a statue in potentiality.

That is how Aristotle defined potency in his *Physics,* whereas Plato spoke of a *non-being existing in some way,* which he confounded sometimes with privation, sometimes with possibility, sometimes, on the contrary, with the imperfect act. That is why the Platonic conception of matter and non-being always remained very obscure.

St. Thomas perfects the Aristotelian notion of *real passive potency,* by distinguishing it more clearly from *pure possibility.* Only this latter is a prerequisite for creation *ex nihilo* (out of nothing), but it is not sufficient for becoming which demands a determinable or changeable subject. Moreover, creation, since it does not presuppose any real passive potency, requires an actively infinite power; it can therefore be

attributed only to God, and not to the sculptor who is the cause of the statue.[33]

Thus becoming or change is explained, contrary to Parmenides. Something comes not from actual, but from potential being.

In like manner is explained the *multiplicity* of forms or acts. When what was in potency *is* in act, there is still a *real potency* underlying the act that it receives; the wood, having already the form called statue, *can* lose it and *receive* another. But as long as the form called statue remains in the wood, it is received and *limited* by it. This same numerically one form *is no longer susceptible of participation,* although a form in every respect like it can be produced in other matter of this kind. Thus is explained the *multiplication* of Apollo's *form,* for instance, according as it can be received and is so, in fact, in the diverse kinds of second matter: wood, earth, marble, etc., and thus it is *susceptible of unlimited participation.*

From all this, it is evident, at least in the order of sensible beings, that *the act, in so far as it is a perfection,* IS NOT *the potency or the capacity for perfection,* but *it is limited and multiplied by the potency.* Now if the act *is not* the potency, if this latter is not identified with the imperfect act, if this judgment, which has its foundation both in the principle of contradiction and in the existence of becoming and multiplicity, has an objective validity, it follows that the potency which limits the act that it receives, is *really distinct* from it.

From this follow several conclusions either in the order of being or substance, or that of action. We will note only the first, adopting the method which starts from sensible things to arrive at God. We shall see that none of these consequences, deduced either by Aristotle or St. Thomas, is of any value unless one views potency as an imperfect act.

1) *Matter is not form, and they are really distinct.*

The principle as given above, that *"act is limited by potency,"* becomes much more evident, if we consider the substantial changes, either, for instance, as to what remains after the death of a lion, the corruption of its corpse—which are remnants certainly deprived of all vegetative and sensitive life—or again the power of assimilation of the nutritive faculty, in virtue of which non-living food undergoes a

[33] See Ia, q. 45, a. 1, 2, 5; IIIa, q. 75, a. 8.

substantial transformation, so as to become living flesh, human flesh.

These substantial changes presuppose a *pure potency,* that is to say, a subject purely determinable and in no way determined. If it were otherwise, the subject of these changes would be already a substance, and these changes would, for the same reason, be accidental and not substantial.

But this pure potency or this pure capacity for a substantial form, is neither nothingness (*ex nihilo, nihil fit*) nor the simple privation of a form to be acquired nor something substantial that is already determined, *"non est quid, nec quale, nec quantum, nec aliquid hujusmodi: it is not a quiddity, nor a quality, nor a quantity, nor anything of this kind,"* neither is it the initial realization of the form nor the imperfect act, just as the wood as determinable subject, which will become a statue, is not the statue in the imperfect state, since this begins to take shape only as the result of the sculptor's labor; *the imperfect act* here is the movement, but not the real potency required for this movement. This capacity for the substantial form is therefore a certain *reality,* a real potency which *is not* the form, but is opposed to it, as the determinable is opposed to the determining. Moreover, this real potency can lose such substantial form and receive another: *corruptio unius est generatio alterius, the corruption of one thing is the generation of another.* Thus it is evident that prime matter is really distinct from substantial form.

The real distinction between prime matter and the form is derived therefore from the distinction between potency and act. This distinction is necessary for the explanation of substantial *change.* The *multiplicity* of the substantial form is explained in the same way. Since matter *endures under the form that it receives,* which it *can* lose, it follows that, for instance, the form of the lion is susceptible of unlimited participation in the matter which *limits* it, so as to constitute with it a composite that is generated and corruptible.

All this is explained at length by Aristotle in the first two books of the *Physics;* the truth of this principle, that *act is limited and multiplied by potency,* is there most clearly demonstrated, at least as regards beings of the sensitive order. St. Thomas considered this principle from a higher plane, that is to say from the domain of metaphysical abstraction. It is to this that he appeals in solving the more universal question of the *changeableness* and *multitude* found in finite beings,

even those quite spiritual, and of God's *infinity* which is essentially and really distinct from everything created.

2) *Created essence is not its existence. There is a real distinction between them.*

St. Thomas considers this principle of Aristotle, that "the form is limited only by the matter," not only from the physical, but according to the highest degree of abstraction, from the metaphysical point of view.

He remarks that the *form* is limited not only, and precisely in so far as it is a *form of the sensible order,* but also as *act* or *perfection.* Every perfection, indeed, which is not limited by itself is so, in fact, by a certain *capacity that it has for perfection* or by the matter inasmuch as it is a *potency.* Hence the absolute universality of the principle, either in the sensible or suprasensible order, that *"act as a perfection is limited only by the potency which is itself a certain capacity for perfection."* Now, adds St. Thomas, *existence* is an act, *and even what is most formal in all things,* as it is ultimate actuality. "Being is the most formal of all things." [34] Nothing has actuality except by *existence.* "It is that which actuates all things, even their forms; it is not compared to other things as the receiver is to the received, but rather as the *received* to the receiver. When I speak of the existence of this man, or this horse, or anything else, existence is considered a formal principle, and as something received, and not as that which is capable of existing.[35] *In itself* existence is not a limited perfection; it is *de facto* limited only by the real potency in which it is received, that is to say, by an infinite essence which is capable of existing. On the other hand, as God's existence is not received in a capacity which limits it, since God is the self-subsisting Being, it is manifest that God is *infinite,* that is to say, *infinitely perfect,*[36] and consequently *"distinct from all* other beings" [37]

For want of a proper understanding of this notion of potency which is a capacity for perfection, certain authors deny the principle that *"the act is limited only by the potency in which it is received,"* or at

[34] See Ia, q. 7, a. 1.
[35] See Ia, q. 4, a. 1 ad 3.
[36] See Ia, q. 7, a. 1.
[37] *Ibid.,* ad 3.

least they do not admit its application in the metaphysical order. Act, they say, is perhaps limited by itself or by the agent who produces it.[88] Louis Rougier in his recent book against Thomism, claims that St. Thomas, in admitting the aforesaid principle in the metaphysical order and affirming a real distinction between essence and existence, is absolutely unfaithful to Aristotle. For us, on the contrary, from this St. Thomas deduces one of the most sublime consequences of the Aristotelian principle, and thereby shows us, whatever Rougier may say, how this principle admirably harmonizes with the dogma of creation and the divine utterance in Exodus: *I am who am.*

Can we demonstrate this principle? It is impossible to give a direct and strictly deductive proof of it. We have here not a conclusion, but a self-evident principle, *per se notum,* obtained solely by the explanation of the terms "act" and "potency."[89] Nevertheless we can offer this explanation of the terms in a discursive form, which is at the same time an indirect demonstration, or one by the process of *reductio ad absurdum.*

It may be said: *"The act,* in so far as it is a *perfection of itself unlimited* in its order (like being, wisdom, love), cannot *de facto* be *limited* except by a principle that is intrinsically relative to this very limitation. Now this principle that is intrinsically relative to this limitation of act, can be only potency or a certain *capacity* for perfection. Therefore the act, in so far as it is a perfection, is limited only by potency, which is itself a capacity for perfection.

The major is evident. If the act is *de facto* limited, but not by itself, being *of itself* unlimited (as appears in the case of existence, wisdom, love), it follows then that the act is *limited* by a principle *other* than itself. Moreover, this principle must be intrinsically relative to this very limitation. If it were otherwise, beings could not exist that are *intrinsically* limited, as the plant and man.

The minor is equally evident. The principle that is intrinsically relative to the limitation, can be only potency or a *capacity for perfection,* as, for instance, the essence of the plant limits its existence which is more restricted than that of the animal, man, or angel. It is not enough, in order to explain this limitation, to have recourse to the

[88] Suarez, *Disp. Met.,* 30, sec. 2, n. 18 f. *Disp. Met.,* 31, sec. 13, nn. 14 f. *De angelis,* Bk. I, chs. xii–xv.

[89] Cf. Guido Mattiussi, S.J., *Le XXIV tesi della Filosofia di S. Tomasso d'Aquino approvate dalla S. Congregazione degli studi* (1917), pp. 1–33.

agent which is the cause of the plant; since it is the *extrinsic* cause, it cannot constitute this limit *intrinsically,* that is, constitute a being that is intrinsically limited.

Moreover, the agent can effect only what *can be caused.* Now the essence of what can be caused *is not* existence, but is only capable of existing. As St. Thomas says (Ia, q. 7, a. 2, ad 1): *"It is against the nature of a made thing for its essence to be its existence; because a subsisting being is not a created being."*

If it were otherwise, the argument of Parmenides, revived by Spinoza, would remain unsolved, namely, that being cannot limit itself, nor multiply itself by itself, but only by a principle *other* than itself. Now, what is not being, is nothing.

We reply to this argument by saying that apart from existence there is the *real capacity* for receiving the act of existing and also of limiting it. This receptive capacity which limits the acts, is not nothing or privation or the imperfect act: it is real potency and is really distinct from the act of existing, just as is the capacity which the wood has for receiving the form of a statue and for losing it. Thus again, prime matter is really distinct from the substantial form that it *can* lose. Matter, previous to any consideration of our mind, IS NOT THE FORM. They are even opposed to each other as "perfectible" to that which perfects, determinable to that which determines. Likewise, created essence or the receptive capacity for existence IS NOT its existence; *existence is not included in the formal concept of it* (the essence of the plant does not include existence as an essential predicate); and neither does the essence itself of the plant belong to the formal concept of existence; this latter can indeed have such or such other limitations, or even be without limitations. *Finite essence* and its *existence* are in opposition therefore to each other as the *perfectible* is to that which *perfects,* the *determinable* to that which *determines,* or as the limit to that which limits.[40] Therefore they are *really distinct* previous to consideration of the mind. We cannot deny it without rejecting either the objectivity of our intellectual faculty, or the truth

[40] Essence and existence are not in opposition to each other as genus and specific difference are, which constitute one sole essence expressed by one unique concept, just as animality and rationality constitute humanity. On the contrary, essence and existence are *objectively irreducible concepts* between themselves and with a third concept; *existence is not an essential but a contingent predicate of all contingent beings.*

of this proposition, that the *essence* of this plant IS NOT *its existence.* This real distinction cannot be perceived by the senses or by the imagination; but the intellect differs from sense perception and imagination, in that it sees or reads what underlies things, the intelligible hidden under the sensible; *intus legit.*[41]

From this we see what a difference there is between the teaching of St. Thomas and of those who say: "Being is absolutely simple, and therefore all that which in some way exists, is *actual being,* although it can be potential as to something else." For them prime matter is already in act, at least imperfectly so; in like manner, created essence is actual being and is not really distinct from its existence. Being, the act of existing, in their view, is limited by itself or *perhaps by the* external *agent* that produces it, but not by the potency in which it is received.[42]

This solution does not go beyond the physical order (that of the physical production of things in a material sense) and does not reach the metaphysical order to which the question however belongs. Consequently, the argument of Parmenides, taken up by Spinoza, against the multiplicity of beings, remains unsolved. It was quite otherwise for St. Thomas. He refuted the argument of Parmenides by saying that it is of the very nature of a *thing made* or *caused* that its essence is not its being.[43] Thus existence is limited by the essence which is intrinsically in proportion to limit it, whereas the agent is the extrinsic cause. Hence these words of St. Thomas: *"Together with the being God produces that which the being receives"* (*De potentia,* q. 3, a. 1 ad 17). In this way, far from abandoning Aristotle, as Rougier claims, the Angelic Doctor shows us how profound is the Aristotelian answer to the arguments of Parmenides.

According to the Thomists, the difference between these two views of potency is far more profound. It has to do with the very notion of *being* which comes in question at the very beginning of ontology, before the discussion of the divisions of being.[44] For St. Thomas,

[41] For the same reason the person of Peter (and the personality which formally constitutes him as such) *is not* his existence; it is really distinct from the latter, and in this it differs from the uncreated personality of Christ.

[42] Cf. Suarez, *Disp. Met.,* XV, sec. 9; *Disp. Met.,* XXX, XXXI.

[43] Cf. Ia, q. 7, a. 2 ad 1.

[44] See Reginald, O.P., who in his work entitled, *Doctrina D. Thomae tria principia,* posits as principles: Being is transcendent and analogous; God is pure Act; absolutes are specified by themselves, relatives by another.

indeed, *being is not univocal, but analogous;* otherwise being could not be diversified. The univocal, like the genus, is diversified by differences which are extrinsic to it. Now, apart from being there is nothing which can constitute a difference. That is why St. Thomas says in his Commentary on the *Metaphysics* of Aristotle (Bk. I, ch. v, lect. 9): *"In this Parmenides and his disciples were deceived, in that they employed the term being, as if* it were one in meaning *and* nature, *as the nature of any genus is. But this is impossible. For* being is not a genus, *but is predicated* in many ways *of* diverse *things."*

Scotus, in teaching the univocation of being, shows a tendency to return some way to the doctrine of Parmenides. Suarez, in seeking a *via media* between St. Thomas and Scotus, maintains that the objective concept of being is *"simply one,"* and consequently all that which *is* in some way, even prime matter, is actual being.[45] In other words, we cannot, according to his view, conceive of pure potency; it would be other than being. Thus it is that the Aristotelian solution of Parmenides' arguments is abandoned, and they remain incapable of solution.

This difference of opinion concerning the fundamental notion *of being* at the very outset of metaphysics, when we start out by arguing from sensible beings to God, brings us in the end to another difference. The supreme truth of Christian philosophy, a truth which very much confirms that of analogy of being, according to St. Thomas is this: *"That only in God are essence and existence identical* (Ia, q. 3, a. 4). In every creature they are distinct. Such is for St. Thomas, whom Suarez abandons on this point, the terminus of the *via inventionis,* way of finding, which, by means of the five classical proofs for God's existence, starts from finite beings, their movements, contingency, compositeness, finality detected in them, until it arrives at *Being itself* who subsists immaterial above all things. This supreme truth is also the starting-point of the *via judicii,* way of judgment, (Ia, q. 79, a. 9), which judges of things from a higher plane, by assigning the highest motive. It is from this source that we deduce the divine attributes and the relations of God the Creator and mover to the being and action of every creature whatsoever it may be.[46]

It is because in God *alone* essence and existence are identical, be-

[45] Suarez, *Disp. Met.,* XV, sec. 9; *Disp. Met.,* XXX, XXXI.

[46] Cf. Ia, q. 1, a. 7; q. 14, a. 8; q. 19, a. 4, 8; q. 22, a. 2; q. 25, a. 3; q. 45, a. 5; q 54, a. 1, 2, 3; q. 104, a. 2; q. 105, a. 3, 4, 5, etc.

cause He alone is *Being itself,* that we must conclude that only in Him can there be no accident, that He alone is infinite, that nothing that is external to Him can exist unless it has been created and preserved in being by Him, that nothing external to Him can act without the divine motion. Action, in fact, presupposes being, and the mode of the action corresponds to the mode of the being that is in action. God alone, who is His existence, who is Being itself, is consequently action itself, intellection itself, love that is itself eternally subsisting. On the other hand, no creature, however perfect it may be, since it is not its existence, is not its own thought and will; but the most perfect angel, just as the least endowed human soul, always is in need of the divine motion in order to think and will anything whatever. Nothing, consequently, escapes the divine motion except evil, which, being a defect, presupposes only a *deficient* cause. It cannot come from God, but is permitted by Him, because He is powerful enough and good enough to draw from it a greater good that is known to Him, a glimpse of which is at times given to us.[47]

Many of these consequences resulting from the distinction between potency and act have been definitely stated in the twenty-four theses approved by the Sacred Congregation of Studies, as being the authentic expression of the main points in the teaching of St. Thomas. It is to these twenty-four theses that we must, in fact, return for a true understanding of this synthesis, the parts of which are not only mechanically juxtaposed as happens in eclectic concepts, but which are also perfectly subordinated according to their close and necessary dependence upon the first truth which is the soul of this body of doctrine.

The last answer to the dilemma: "God determining or determined; there is no other alternative."

This dilemma has been answered as follows: "God, the primary source of being, is thereby the primary source of all determination. Therefore, if it is only a question of an influence *more or less direct,* more or less immediate, of a causality in the broad sense, it will be right to say that God is the universal determiner. . . . Rational beings, subject to the prevailing system of liberty . . . realize the divine plan only by a *supplementary determination which they give*

[47] Cf. Ia, q. 48, a. 1, 2, 3; q. 49, a. 1, 2; q. 22, a. 2; Ia IIae, q. 79, a. 1, 2.

to themselves. . . . The person's choice determines the act to be such as it is and not otherwise; the divine influence, without which nothing exists, *determines the act simply to be."*

What is this answer worth? It is equivalent to saying that, if Peter and Judas are supposedly situated in *the same circumstances* with the same duty to fulfil, with *the same* divine concurrence, receiving *equal help* (a simultaneous concurrence or even an indifferent, physical premotion), the person's choice *determines* the act to be *such* as it is and not otherwise; in other words, *determines* the act *quite as much in the direction of good* as in that of evil. Thus it does not depend upon God that the good consent is *in Peter rather* than Judas, and not vice versa. The *difference* between the two men is due solely to the created free will, not at all to God. Hence God, since He is not *determining,* has been *determined* to see *which* of these two, supposedly situated in the same circumstances and *equally* helped, *would* choose and will choose the good, when they are actually situated in these very circumstances. Therefore the dilemma remains in full force.

The proffered answer is perfectly in conformity with the teaching of Molina, who says: "It can happen that one prevented and called *by a far greater grace,* of his own free will is *not converted,* and another *with a far less grace* is converted" (*Concordia,* q. 14, a. 13, disp. XII, Paris ed., 1876, p. 51; also p. 565). On p. 196 we read: "That our acts are performed in a *good* or *bad* way, which we can accomplish by the faculty alone of our free will and the general concurrence of God, *is due not to God,* but to ourselves as an individual and free cause." The answer given is also equivalent to the well-known proposition of Lessius, who says: "Of two *equally called,* the one accepts and the other rejects the grace that is offered, this is truly said *to be due to the free will alone;* not that he who accepts, does so of his own accord, but because *the* DIFFERENCE COMES FROM THE FREE WILL ALONE, so that it is not due to the diversity of prevenient grace" (*De gratia efficaci,* ch. xviii, n. 7).

To this the Thomists have always replied, that this doctrine cannot be maintained without being in contradiction to the spirit and even the words of St. Paul who (I Cor. 4: 7) says: *"Who distinguisheth thee? What hast thou which thou hast not received?"* It would follow indeed from this that what is *of preference* in the salutary act, its *free determination to good* rather than evil, does not come from God. It would be, as they tell us, "a supplementary determination that the

creature gives itself." That which would come from the First Cause would be, not this good that is freely determined, but the being or existence of the act, and this equally so for the bad as for the good act.

On the contrary, St. Thomas says (Ia, q. 20, a. 2): *"The love of God infuses and creates goodness in things"*; a. 4: "God's will is the cause of goodness in things; *and the reason why some things are better than others, is that God wills for them a greater good.* Hence it follows that *He loves more the better things.*" Also (on Matt. 25: 15), he says: "He who makes a greater effort, does so because of a greater grace; but that *he makes a greater effort, he needs to be moved by a higher cause.* Also, on Ephes. 4: 7, and Ia IIae, q. 112, a. 4. Cf. Salmanticenses, *De gratia,* disp. VII, *De gratia efficaci,* dub. I, sec. 4, nn. 17 ff.

They say that the person's choice is only the cause of "a purely negative determination." It would be a purely negative determination, if it were a question of the bad act as such, the determination of which is essentially deficient; but if it is a question of the good act, that is quite another thing. Here the free determination, far from being "purely negative," is what is noblest in the salutary act, that which distinguishes it from sin.

This *free determination* in the direction of good, though being a *limiting* potency with reference to the *existence* itself of the free act, is itself a positive perfection with reference to the *free faculty* that it actuates. In like manner, the soul is in potency with reference to its act of existing, but it is act and perfection with reference to the matter that it animates.

The doctrine that we here defend comes back to this simple proposition: The *divine decrees* that concern our salutary acts, *are efficacious of themselves* and not because our consent was foreseen. This doctrine is manifestly that of St. Augustine,[48] St. Thomas,[49] and almost all theologians who never admitted the *scientia media.*

[48] De *civitate Dei,* V, ch. ix: "All bodies are most of all subject to the will of God, to whom all wills also are subject, since they have no power except what He has bestowed upon them. . . . *Wherefore our wills have just so much power as God* WILLED *and foreknew that they should have.*" Hence it is evident that the foreknowledge of our free salutary acts is founded, according to St. Augustine, upon the decree of the divine will, as the Thomists generally point out from several other texts taken from *De dono perseverantiae,* ch. xvii, and *De praedestinatione sanctorum,* ch. x. Both St. Augustine and St. Thomas deduce from this thesis, all the others that concern foreknowledge and predestination.

[49] See Ia, q. 19, a. 4: *"Determined* effects proceed from His own infinite

We consider it a duty, a religious duty on our part, to defend this sublime doctrine; for if it is properly understood, it saves us from falling into many theoretical and practical errors. It prevents us from dealing with God as with a mere associate who would have merely his part to do, whilst we would be doing our part, at times in a very human way, and it would not be the less important. On the contrary, St. Thomas has said: *"There is no distinction between what comes from free will and what is of predestination; as there is no distinction between what comes from a secondary and from a first cause"* (Ia, q. 23, a. 5).

This sublime doctrine teaches us how essentially necessary it is for us to pray according to the spirit of our Lord's words: *"Without me, you can do nothing"* (John 15: 5), and those of St. Paul, who says: *"It is God who worketh in you, both to will and to accomplish, according to His good will"* (Phil. 2: 13). If this Thomist doctrine is true, we fully understand why our Lord recommends that *"we ought always to pray and not to faint"* (Luke 18: 1), and precisely for this that we may ask for the grace that of itself is efficacious, and which we stand in need of every moment for the fulfilment of our duties.

Bossuet very well understood this when he wrote: [50] "Here again is a terrible stumbling-block for human pride. Man says to himself: I have my free will; God has made me free and I wish to justify myself. I wish that the act which decides my eternal salvation, originate from me. . . . I wish to find something which I can cling to in my free will, which I cannot grant with this surrender to grace.

"Proud contradictor, do you wish to grant these things, or truly believe that God grants them? He grants them in such a way, that He wills, without dispensing you from doing your part, that you attribute finally to Him all that pertains to our salvation; for He is the Savior and He says: 'There is no Savior besides me' (Is. 43: 11). *Believe indeed that Jesus Christ is the Savior, and there will be an*

perfection according to the *determination of His will and intellect."* Cf. Ia, q. 19, a. 8: "Since the divine will is perfectly efficacious, it follows not only that things are done which God wills to be done, but also that they are done *in the way* that He wills." *Ibid.*, ad 2: *"From the very fact that nothing resists the divine will,* it follows that not only those things happen that God wills to happen, but that they happen necessarily or *contingently* according to His will. Also Ia IIae, q. 10, a. 4 ad 3.

[50] *Elévations sur les mystères,* 18th week, 15th elevation.

end of all contradictions." Theological researches which are not directed to this contemplation, are to no purpose. Let us be grateful to St. Augustine and St. Thomas for having shown us the true way that leads to it. They were not only dialecticians, they were true and great contemplatives. Let us truly believe with them that Jesus Christ is the Savior, and there will be an end of all contradictions.

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